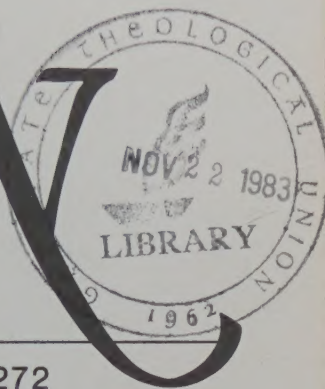


OCTOBER 1983

The HYMN

A Journal of Congregational Song



VOLUME 34 NUMBER 4 ISSN 0018-8272

The Language of Hymns

621

P. M.

The pastor's farewell.

- 1 MY brethren, farewell; I do you no
I'm sorry to leave you, I love you so
But now I must go, and where I don't know,
Wherever Christ bids me the trumpet to blow;
- 2 Strange friends I shall find; I hope they'll
prove kind;
Neither people nor place shall alter my mind;
Wherever I be, I'll still pray for thee,
And, O, my dear brethren, do you pray for me.
- 3 'Tis here I've labored, and I
And labor is sweet, if my Je
And when I am done, I ho
Where Jesus is with me, and

- 1 "Servant of God, well done;
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy."
- 2 The voice at midnight came;
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame;
He fell, but felt no fear.
- 3 Tranquil amid alarms,
It found him on the field,
A veteran slumbering on his arms,
Beneath his red-c
- 4 The pains of death
Labor and sorrow
And, life's long wa
His soul is found
- 5 Soldier of Christ,
Praise be thy ne
And, while eternal
Rest in thy Savi

- 1 Brother, though from yonder sky
Cometh neither voice nor cry,
Yet we know for thee to-day
Every pain hath passed away.
- 2 Not for thee shall tears be given.
Child of God and heir of heaven;
For he gave thee sweet release;
Thine the Christian's death of peace.
- 3 Brother, in that solemn trust
We commend thee, dust to dust;
In that faith we wait, till, risen,
Thou shalt meet us all in heaven.
- 4 While we weep as Jesus wept,
Thou shalt sleep as Jesus slept,
With thy Saviour thou shalt
Crowned

C. M.

Godly sorrow from Christ's death.

- 1 ALAS! and did my Saviour bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?



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The Hymn is a quarterly, published in January, April, July, and October by the Hymn Society of America, Inc. Opinions expressed in *The Hymn* are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Hymn Society of America.

Editorial Policy

The Hymn is a journal of congregational song for church musicians, clergy, scholars, poets, and others with varied backgrounds and interests. A journal of research and opinion, containing practical and scholarly articles, *The Hymn* reflects diverse cultural and theological identities, and also provides exemplary hymn texts and tunes in various styles.

Membership

Regular membership (individual) \$18 per year; Student membership \$10; Institutional subscription \$18; add \$3 for Canadian and foreign memberships; Supporting membership \$30; Contributing membership \$75; Life membership \$350; Patron \$500; and Benefactor \$1,000.

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Articles in *The Hymn* are indexed by the *Music Index* and indexed and abstracted in *Religion Index One* and in *Religious and Theological Abstracts*.

Typography and printing by Simmons Press, Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana.

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OCTOBER 1983

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Published by the Hymn Society of America

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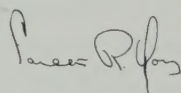
Editor's

COLUMN

Contributors to this issue of *The Hymn* bring lively and diverse commentary to bear upon the language controversy in hymns.

S. Paul Schilling, distinguished theologian, provides a carefully balanced presentation of the issues, blending in some tentative suggestions for those persons who wish to make textual changes. Reflecting on his work as part of the editorial team of *Hymns for Today's Church* (1982), Christopher Idle cautions hymnal committees to "mind our language when we magnify the Lord!" "The Bartered, Battered Bride," authored by Helen B. Pearson, questions the adequacy of the text "The Church's One Foundation" as a confession of faith. Roy Reed discusses some problems implicit in either changing or maintaining sexist imagery in hymns. And for our readers who think that sexist language is an issue for poets, scholars and practitioners who reside in North America, the English hymn writer, Brian Wren, puts that notion aside in his article which we reprint from the July 1983 issue of *News of Hymnody*. Constance F. Parvey raises the fundamental question of the adequacy of traditional language for expressing inclusiveness in the total context of liturgy, including hymnody.

After reading these articles, I suspect that some may wonder how much longer the English texts in traditional choral and solo repertoire, and the titles of chorale preludes will remain exempt from alteration and change. The answer to that question, and others, will be processed primarily in the life and work of those churches and synagogues where stubborn adherence to the past and not so gentle urgings into the future have traditionally coexisted.



Carlton R. Young
Professor of Church Music
Candler School of Theology
Emory University
Guest Editor

President's

MESSAGE

The summer of 1983 will be remembered by many as the hottest summer of the century! But by hymn enthusiasts it will be remembered as one of the busiest ever. Three major hymn convocations were held and are reported in this issue. For those who shared in these events, it will be an opportunity to relive exciting and unusual experiences. For those who were unable to participate, you can be informed of what went on—where.

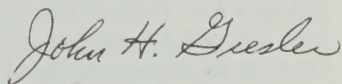
Our Society makes it possible to participate in significant events and keeps us informed on what is happening in hymnology around the world. We are quite aware of the distinct natures of our three major hymn societies. It is important that we meet together and exchange our concerns, share our interests, and seek to understand our differences.

The environment of each church musician, pastor, or hymnology professor demands radically different skills, resources, and concerns. It was enlightening in Budapest to see the zeal of the "scientist" as he sought to find the true example of the "contrafaktur." It was inspiring to see the concern for excellence of those who

take very seriously their role as a cultural vigilante.

It is an education to learn how the church has withstood the onslaught of Romans, Barbarians, Celts, Huns, Magyars, Turks, Czars, Emperors, Dictators and heartless Socialism, and can still sing its faith. It may be expressed by pristine plainsong or lusty choruses, in simple folksong melodies or complex cantatas. It can be sung in the privacy of one's dormitory or chanted in great granite cathedrals that echo incessantly.

The gifts of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs enrich our lives in countless ways, especially in the richness of our American hymnody. We are heirs of a worldwide heritage of multiple languages, cultures, and traditions. We are grateful to all who share with us the joy they find in expressing their faith in this vast variety. It does not impoverish them and makes us rich indeed!



John H. Giesler

1984 HYMNIC ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by Thomas H. Porter

I. Anniversaries of Compositions, Publication, Arrangement, or Translation

ANNIVERSARY AND TITLE

COMPOSER, AUTHOR, TRANSLATOR

50th—1934

Hail Thee! Spirit, Lord Eternal (pub.)
Have Faith in God (MUSKOGEE)
Great Redeemer, We Adore Thee
Non nobis, Domine (pub.)

Sydney James Wallis, *The Sign*
B. B. McKinney
John Roy Harris
Rudyard Kipling

Now Once Again for Help That Never
Faileth (pub.)

Pageant of Parliament
Mildred Whitney Stillman,
Apology to My Neighbors

This Is My Song (stanzas 1 & 2)

Lloyd Stone
Robert G. McCutchan

ALL THE WORLD

BOUNDLESS MERCY

har. Hilton Rufty

DISTLER

Hugo Distler

KEDRON

har. Hilton Rufty

SHENG EN

Su Yin-lan

100th-1884

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind (pub.)

John Greenleaf Whittier,
Worship Song

God of the Prophets, Bless the Prophets' Son

Denis Wortman

Hail Holy Queen Enthroned Above

Anonymous, c. 1884

Only-begotten, Word of God Eternal

tr. Maxwell J. Blacker

Since I Have Been Redeemed (OTHELLO)

Edwin O. Excell

The God of Abraham Praise

trs. Newton Mann and

W. C. Gannett

Thine Is the Glory, Risen, Conquering Son

Edmond Budry

ST. MARGARET

Albert L. Peace

150th-1834

Calm on the Listning Ear of Night

Edmund Hamilton Sears

God of Mercy, God of Grace

Henry F. Lyte

In the Hour of Trial (pub.)

James Montgomery

Original Hymns

Just As I Am, Without One Plea

Charlotte Elliott

Lord of Our Life, and God of Our Salvation (par.)

Philip Pusey

My God, My Father, While I Stray (pub.)

Charlotte Elliott,

Invalid's Hymn Book

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Edward Mote

O Holy Saviour, Friend Unseen

Charlotte Elliott

Pleasant Are Thy Courts Above (pub.)

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

BIRMINGHAM (pub.)

MARTYN

200th-1784

AD TUUM NOMEN (pub.)

AR HYD Y NOS (pub.)

AVE MARIA, KLARER UND LICHTER
MORGENSTERN (pub.)

ARLINGTON (adpt.)

BLACKBOURNE (pub.)

CAMBRIDGE (pub.)

ELLACOMBE (pub.)

HAYN (pub.)

250th—1794

With the Lord Begin Your Task (pub.)

BANGOR (pub.)

RUTHERFORD

SCHOP (pub.)

300th—1684

He Who Would Valiant Be (pub.)

400th—1584

AVE VIRGO VIRGINUM (pub.)

LEISENTRITT (pub.)

450th—1534

KOMMT HER ZU MIR (pub.)

Henry Francis Lyte,
Spirit of the Psalms
Henry Francis Lyte,
Spirit of the Psalms
Francis Cunningham,
Selection of Psalm Tunes
Simeon B. Marsh

from the Chartres Antiphoner
Edward Jones, *Musical Relicks*
of the Welsh Bards

M. V. Werkmeister,
Gesangbuch der Herzogl.
Hofkapelle

Ralph Harrison
Harrison's *Sacred Harmony*
Samuel S. Wesley, *Sacred*
Harmony—A Collection of
Psalm-tunes Ancient
and Modern

Gesangbuch der Herzogl.
Wirtembergischen
Katholischen Hofkapelle
Gregor's *Choralbuch*

tr. W. Gustave Polack
Morgen- und Abend-segen,
Waldenburg
William Tans'ur
Complete Melody or Harmony
Chrétien Urhan
Johann Schop, alt. & har
J. S. Bach in *Christmas*
Oratorio, Part II

John Bunyan,
Pilgrim's Progress

Leisentritt's *Gesangbuch*
Leisentritt's *Gesangbuch*

Nürnberg

II. Anniversaries for Birth and Death Dates of Authors, Composers, Arrangers, and Translators

ANNI- VERSARY	TITLE	COMPOSER, AUTHOR, TRANSLATOR, DATES
b.50th	DULWICH	Clement Charles McWilliam (b. 1934)
	<i>har.</i> O MENSCH SIEH	Gerre Hancock (b. 1934)
	<i>arr.</i> MANNA	Kurt Frederic Kaiser (b. 1934)
	PASSIT ON	
	EDEN CHURCH	Dale Wood (b. 1934)
	LAUREL	
	TUOLUMNE	
	WOJTKIEWIECZ	
d. 50th	<i>tr.</i> Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming	Theodore Baker (1851-1934)
	<i>tr.</i> We Gather Together to Ask the Lord's Blessings	Theodore Baker (1851-1934)
	Face to Face with Christ, My Savior	Carrie E. Breck (1855-1934)
	GRANHAM	Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
	<i>arr.</i> PERSONENT HODIE	
	PRINCE RUPERT	
	VALIENT HEARTS	
	NORTHAMPTON	Charles John King (1859-1934)
	O Song of Man, Thou Madest Known	Milton S. Littlefield (1864-1934)
	FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH	Edward W. Naylor (1867-1934)
	Have Thine Own Way, Lord	Adelaide Addison Pollard (1862-1934)
	<i>arr.</i> DIVA SERVATRIX	George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)
	<i>tr.</i> Now Woods and Wolds Are Sleep- ing	George R. Woodward (1848-1934)
	<i>har.</i> PUER NOBIS NASCITUR	
	<i>tr.</i> Shepherds in the Field Abiding	
	<i>arr.</i> PAX TECUM	Charles Vincent (1852-1934)
b.100th	There's Within My Heart a Melody (SWEETEST NAME)	Luther Burgess Bridgers (1884-1948)
	Jesus, Son of Blessed Mary	Charles Edward Riley (1884-1972)
	CORONA	Charles Hylton Stewart (1884-1932)
	ROCHESTER	
	CARLSON	H. Everett Titcomb (1884-1932)

d.100th	Spirit of Truth, of Life We Place Upon Your Table, Lord O Lamb of God, Still Keep Me	Horace Westwood (b. 1884) M.F.C. Wilson (1884-1944) James George Deck (1802-1884) John Hullah (1812-1884) George Kingsley (1811-1884)
b.150th	BENTLEY HEBER <i>arr.</i> MESSIAH CLOSE TO THEE Now the Day is Over (EUDOXIA)	Silas J. Vail (1818-1884) Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)
	Onward, Christian Soldiers <i>tr.</i> Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow AMESBURY	Uzziah Christopher Burnap (1834-1900)
	<i>arr.</i> ARTHUR'S SEAT HINCHMAN <i>arr.</i> SERENITY Heavenly Father, Bless Me Now Advent Tells Us Christ Is Near I Love to Tell the Story Tell Me the Old, Old Story Just As I Am, Thine Own to Be	Alexander Clark (1834-1911) Katherine Hankey (1834-1911)
	Father, Lead Me Day By Day	Marianne Hearn (1834-1909) John Page Hopps (1834-1911) Herbert Stephen Irons (1834-1905)
	IRONS SOUTHWELL O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus	Samuel Trevor Francis (1834-1925)
	He Leadeth Me! O Blessed Thought	Joseph Henry Gilmore (1834-1918)
	SURSUM CORDA MARION	George Lomas (1834-1884) Arthur Henry Messiter (1834-1916)
	O Zion Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling	Mary Ann Thomson (1834-1923)
d.150th	EPWORTH	Charles Wesley, Jr. (1757-1834)
	LYSTRA Lamp of Our Feet, Whereby We Trace Walk in the Light AZMON <i>alt.</i> Come, Ye Disconsolate, Where'er Ye Languish Hail to the Brightness of Zion's Glad Morning	Bernard Barton (1784-1849) Carl G. Gläser (1784-1829) Thomas Hastings (1784-1872)

d.150th	ORTONVILLE RETREAT TOPLADY GERALD SPOHR	Thomas Hastings (1784-1872)
d.200th	Jesus Makes My Heart Rejoice O, Blest the House	Louis Spohr (1784-1859) Henrietta Luise von Hayn (1724-1784) Christoph C.L. von Pfeil (1712-1784)
b.250th	Sweet the Moments, Rich in Blessing <i>arr.</i> CHESTERFEILD RICHMOND ABRIDGE ALLGÜTIGER, MEIN PREISGESANG	James Allen (1734-1804) Thomas Haweis (1734-1820) Isaac Smith (1734-1805) Georg Peter Weimer (1734-1800)
d.250th	Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices	Johann Mentzer (1658-1734)
d.300th	Blessed Jesus, at Thy Word Dearest Jesus, at Your Word We Believe in One True God Comfort, Comfort Ye My People	Tobias Clausnitzer (1619-1684) Johannes Olearius (1611-1684)
b.350th	All Who Believe and Are Baptized Praise and Thanks and Adoration On My Heart Imprint Your Image O Jesus, Blessed Lord MEINEN JESUM LASS ICH NICHT	Thomas H. Kingo (1634-1703) Johann Ulich (1634-1712)
d.350th	<i>arr. attr.</i> WINCHESTER OLD	George Kirbye (1560-1634)
b.400th	<i>attr.</i> Do Not Despair, O Little Flock ST. THEODULPH VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN	Johann M. Altenburg (1584-1630) Melchior Teschner (1584-1635)
d.450th	Christ the Lord is Risen Again FREUEN WIR UNS ALL IN EIN	Michael Weisse (c.1488-1534)
b.500th	Salvation Unto Us Has Come	Paul Speratus (1484-1551)
d.550th	Come Down, O Love Divine	Bianco da Siena (d. 1434?)
d.1250th	A Great and Mighty Wonder	St. Germanus (c.634-c.734)

Corrections

Please make the following corrections in your July issue, page 157: Change the hymn tune name from LIGHT OF LIFE to LIGHT OF LIGHT, and change the word "the" in the final line of the hymn to "our," so that it reads "show our world your human face." Our apologies to Margaret Clarkson and to the family of Sir Ernest MacMillan.

Also in your July issue, page 179, column one: In the review of "God Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!" change the word "Christmas" to "Easter."

Suggestions for Observing 1984 Hymnic Anniversaries

Thomas H. Porter



Thomas H. Porter is a minister (music, education, and administration) of the University Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He holds the Ed.D. in church music from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. His "Theses and Dissertations Related to American Hymnody" appeared in our July 1979 issue.

Several changes have been made in presenting the 1984 Hymnic Anniversaries. This year, in order to allow for more advance planning on the part of the readers of *The Hymn*, the Editorial Advisory Board recommended that the list and its companion article on Suggestions for Observing 1984 Hymnic Anniversaries be included in the October rather than the January issue. Additionally, they recommend that only anniversaries at 50 and 100 year intervals be included, thus eliminating the 25 year observances as listed in the past.

These Hymnic Anniversaries are included each year to encourage readers to present this information in a variety of ways to those with whom they worship, work, live and minister. The worship leader(s), minister or musician, can use anniversary materials in formulating worship, evangelistic, and/or prayer services as well as meetings of small groups and non-church organizations.

Excellent suggestions are included by authors of articles related to observing hymnic anniversaries in previous editions of *The Hymn*. In the January 1983 issue Virginia Cross presents many enlightening ideas for celebrating hymnic anniversaries

with small groups, non-church organizations, as well as during church services.¹

Merril Smoak, in his "Suggestions for Observing 1982 Hymnic Anniversaries,"² provides many excellent ideas for sharing anniversary information with members of the congregation and other associates. Individuals, groups, and congregations can express themselves through singing during worship and praise services with more understanding if worship leaders would devote a little time and imagination during preparation. Brief notes concerning hymnic anniversaries can be printed in the order of worship or read prior to their being sung. Concise and informative statements are most often most effective. More detailed information concerning a hymn, composer, author, etc. can often be published in the weekly or monthly mailout or news letter of a church.

Services based on hymnic material have proven very valuable in the life of many congregations. These Hymn Festivals or Hymn Sings are effective as either informal singing through hymns or by using a more formal concert format for a service. A variety of themes and types of services can be formed from the hymnic anniver-

saries for 1984. Services could center around major poets, authors, composers, scripture based hymns, historical studies, doctrine emphases, etc., to mention only a few. By combining congregational hymn singing with other solo, ensemble, anthem, and/or instrumental literature based on hymns, the worship leader can organize a wide variety of services.

Many of our readers are instrumentalists. We encourage you to become more aware of the repertoire based on hymn tunes and/or compositions by well known composers who also composed hymn tunes. As teachers, you have the opportunity to instruct your students in the study of hymns and hymnic repertoire and their historical background.

In our daily living, we can use information written about these anniversary hymns as well as all hymns to support our theology, doctrine, and philosophy. There use is practically limitless. Be creative in

making yourself and those around you more aware of hymns, their historical setting, and their meaning. Find and use the resources available such as the works of Ernest K. Emurian,³ Austin C. Lovelace,⁴ Dean B. McIntyre,⁵ and Keith C. Clark.⁶

Notes

1. Virginia Cross, "Suggestions for Observing 1983 Hymnic Anniversaries," *The Hymn* 34 (January 1983), 12-13.
2. A. Merril Smoak, Jr., "Suggestions for Observing 1982 Hymnic Anniversaries," *The Hymn* 33 (January 1982), 39-41.
3. Ernest K. Emurian, *Dramatized Stories of Hymns and Hymn Writers* (Boston: W.A. Wilde Co., 1941), and *More Dramatized Stories of Hymns and Hymn Writers* (Boston, W.A. Wilde Col, 1943).
4. Austin C. Lovelace, "Hymn Festivals" (Hymn Society of America, Paper XXXI).
5. Dean B. McIntyre, "Commemorative Festival of Hymns for the Year 1981," *The Hymn* 32 (January 1981), 7-10, and "Commemorative Festival of Hymns for the Year 1980," *The Hymn* 31 (January 1980), 6-9.
6. Keith C. Clark, "Bibliography for the Study of Hymns" (Hymn Society of America, Paper XXXIII, 1980).

Richard Hillert

(Dr. Hillert's hymn tune FRARY, set to a hymn text of Fred Pratt Green, was published in our July issue. Pratt Green's biographical sketch appeared in our October 1977 issue.)

Richard Hillert was born March 14, 1923 in Granton, Wisconsin. He started writing music at 14, received a BS in Education from Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois (1941), Master of Music (1955) and Doctor of Music (1968) from Northwestern University. He has served parishes in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Illinois, and since 1959 has been Professor of Music at Concordia. He served on committees for The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in preparing *Worship Supplement* (1969) and the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978). He



served as Assistant Editor for *Church Music* (1966-1980), has written numerous articles pertaining to music and worship, is a member of Pi Kappa Lambda. A prolific composer, his works are for piano, organ, solo voice, choir, chamber groups, and orchestra plus musical materials in the area of hymnody and liturgy. He is married to Gloria Bonnin Hillert, and they have three children: Kathryn, Virginia, and Jonathan.

Inclusive Language*

S. Paul Schilling



Faith We Sing (1983), from which this article is taken.

S. Paul Schilling is professor emeritus of systematic theology, Boston University School of Theology. An ordained United Methodist minister, he has served churches in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D. C. before teaching at the school which is now Wesley Theological Seminary. The most recent of his eight books is *The*

In recent years perceptive Christian women, with much male support, have participated actively in the movement demanding equal rights and opportunities for women in all areas of society. Astute interpreters of Christian faith like Letty M. Russell, Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Rosemary Radford Ruether, and Leonard Swidler have written illuminatingly on the biblical and theological grounds for removing sex-related restrictions and asserting the full equality of women in the churches and elsewhere. Indeed, Christians especially should be concerned to affirm the dignity and rights of women. The universality of the gospel itself undermines all justification for the dominance of any group. The apostle Paul makes plain that baptism frees us from all false divisions to appreciation of our true unity: "All baptized in Christ, you have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:27-28, Jerusalem Bible).

This radically egalitarian position is winning increasing acceptance within the churches. Barriers to the full exercise of leadership respon-

sibilities by women are being removed at all levels. Inevitably this concern involves attention to the language of worship, which historically has been male-oriented. The Education and Ministry unit of the National Council of Churches has recently acted to provide an inclusive-language translation of the ecumenical lectionary that will seek to avoid generic words like *man* which exclude or imply a secondary status for women. Similar sensitivity has emerged regarding the extent of sexist language in our hymns.

The Problems of Sexist Language

Sensitivity to masculine-dominated language in hymns is a recent development. The Introduction of *The Hymnal 1940 Companion*, describing one of the finest 20th-century collections, provides unwittingly a vivid illustration of how easily we can be exclusive even while trying to be inclusive. Citing inclusiveness and universality as marks of the hymnbook, the editors mention race, nationality, religion, and learning as influences which sometimes separate "men." This omission of the barrier of sex and the assumption that women are represented by men reflect accurately the attitudes typical

*Chapter 13: "Inclusive Language" from *The Faith We Sing*, by S. Paul Schilling. Copyright ©1983 S. Paul Schilling. Reprinted and used by permission of The Westminster Press, 925 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.

of the period—attitudes that are still widely held.

Growing numbers of Christians, especially in America, are distressed by passages in hymns that use male images to refer to God, female terms to characterize entities such as nature or the church, and masculine nouns and pronouns to designate women as well as men. Yet at the same time many church members, including women, ask in effect, "Why all the fuss? Everybody knows that *man* means both sexes, and no downgrading of women is intended or implied. Why bother about mere words?"

The words we use express and reinforce attitudes and ideas, so they may never be taken lightly. Often when we say that language isn't important, we mean that the language in question is not hurting *us*. In such cases we need to develop enough sensitivity to the feelings of others to imagine ourselves in their place. If we do this, we discover that many worshipers are offended by exclusive language. Concern for all members of the body of Christ will prompt action to remove such impediments to true community and reality in worship.

There are two main grounds for eliminating male-dominated language from our hymns.

1. Increasing numbers of women are alienated by it, and many male worshipers also are disturbed by its demeaning connotations for persons who comprise a majority in most congregations. When male terms are regularly used to include females, and female words are never understood to include males, women readily receive the impression that they don't matter, or in any case are seen as subordinate to men.

The problem is compounded by the slippery nature of words like *man* and *mankind* as commonly used. They

may mean all people or all males, whereas female terms mean only women. The implication of feminine inferiority should be plain. The result is that many thoughtful women suspect that maleness rather than humanness is meant by so-called generic language, and feel deprived of their true identity. As Letty M. Russell has written:

However much a particular person or organization may protest that the words (*man*, brotherhood, *he*, etc.) *really mean* human, human beings, his and hers, humankind, peoplehood, etc., the fact remains that women are frequently left out of both the mental structures and the social structures of our culture. Their history is not only invisible, they themselves are frequently invisible in the way the male-dominated society speaks its language and makes its decisions.¹

Christians who may not feel personally threatened by masculine language can hardly be content to have devoted members of the Christian community estranged in the very act of corporate worship that should bind them together.

2. Such language tends to reinforce a social order in which women are cast in a subordinate role. In such a situation they are unable to fulfill their potential or make their maximum contribution. The results are detrimental to men as well as women. All suffer from restrictions artificially imposed on any. When the church through the language of its worship helps to perpetuate an unequal recognition of basic human rights, it undermines rather than advances the abundant life sought by Jesus for all people. This influence may be quite unintended, but it reinforces the notion that maleness is normative humanity, while female humanity occupies a lower level.

We shall now examine typical lyrics that for various reasons have elicited objections from inclusivists, and then consider what steps can and should be taken to achieve the greatest possible freedom from sexist language.

Hymns That Subordinate Women

Male images and pronouns relating to God frequently occur in the same hymn with masculine nouns and pronouns that refer to women as well as men. We shall therefore make no attempt to separate these two forms of male-dominated language, but consider them as they appear.

Isaac Watts extols the Lord Jehovah as the heavenly, universal King. His sovereign power "made us of clay, and formed us men." Hence "men of grace" who love the Lord are called upon to surround his throne. "Happy the man" who relies on his wisdom, goodness, and almighty power. When we praise God as "our help in ages past" we are reminded that time "bears all its sons away." Watts seems to forget that time's daughters are also subject to aging! Charles Wesley likewise summons Christians to praise the great Lord and King, "him from whom all good proceeds." Rejoicing over the risen Christ, "sons of men and angels say, Alleluia!"

Philip Doddridge's "How Gentle God's Commands!" invites worshippers to "cast their burdens on the Lord, and trust his constant care," as well as to find refreshment at their Father's throne. We are secure in God's care, for "his goodness stands approved." In Frederick W. Faber's apostrophe to the "faith of our fathers," mothers are not mentioned, and it is mankind that becomes truly free.

Many hymns on the Trinity appear to conceive of the three "persons" in

masculine terms. Typical of these are Reginald Heber's "Holy, Holy, Holy," Ignaz Franz's "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name," and Charles Wesley's "Come, Father, Son, And Holy Ghost." Sometimes identification with the male image is quite explicit, as in Martin Rinkart's "Now Thank We All Our God":

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven

Seen as a whole the hymns of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contain even more sexist language than their predecessors. Ironically, lyrics influenced by the rise of the social gospel are probably the greatest offenders. Written before the Christian conscience had been sensitized to include equal rights for women, these hymns emphasize themes like the brotherhood of man, apparently assuming that women are adequately covered by the phrase. We cite five hymns, all written between 1901 and 1919.

In "This Is My Father's World" Maltbie D. Babcock consistently uses male pronouns to describe the one who "shines in all that's fair." He also broadens the male image to declare that "the Lord is King."

In Frank Mason North's "Where Cross The Crowded Ways Of Life," it is the Son of man whose voice we hear amid the selfish "cries of race and clan," and the Master is called to abide among these restless throngs "till sons of men" learn his love.

Henry van Dyke's Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" uses male-dominated language to voice its appeal for the love that is our appropriate response to the "God of glory, Lord of love." Singing "Thou our Father, Christ our brother," we learn how to

love God and one another. Then we can join the mighty chorus:

Father love is reigning o'er us,
brother love binds man to man.

William P. Merrill's "Rise Up, O Men of God" has sexist language in each of its four stanzas. The men of God—presumably including women—are challenged to serve the King of kings and thus "bring in the day of brotherhood / and end the night of wrong." The church, whose strength is "unequal to her task," is pictured as feminine, but the men of God are summoned to "make her great." In so doing they act "as brothers of the Son of man."

The second stanza of Clifford Bax's "Turn Back, O Man Forswear Thy Foolish Ways" affirms that "earth might be fair and all men glad and wise," if only man would "wake from out his haunted sleep." However, the third stanza moves toward inclusiveness by substituting *people* and *folk* for *men*, though it still speaks of "man's old undaunted cry."

In the mid-twentieth century, male terms continue to be used to refer to both God and human beings. The following passages are taken from lyrics written between 1930 and 1968. A hymn of praise by John J. Moment opens with the invitation, "Men and children everywhere, / with sweet music fill the air!" It continues with appeals to nations and natural forces to bless "the Lord of life and truth and light," but nowhere mentions women.²

In Percy Dearmer's "As The Disciples, When Thy Son Had Left Them" the worshipers draw the parallel between their gathering and that of their early predecessors in the faith:

So may we here, a company of
brothers,
make this our love-feast and

commemoration;
that in his Spirit we may have more
worthy participation.³

In "Christ Is The World's True Light" George W. Briggs lauds Christ as "the captain of salvation" and the bright daystar "of every man and nation." "Where'er men own his sway," new life and hope awake.⁴

Albert F. Bayly's "Praise and thanksgiving / Father, we offer" acknowledges our responsibility to share with one another the food that is the fruit of our labors, "so that rejoicing with us, our brother / may know thy care." With "all men confessing" God's gracious hand, all will be blessed, and where the divine will reigns "no man will hunger."⁵

In "Father, Lord Of All Creation" Stewart Cross prays for grace that "we may love as brothers / all whose burdens we can share." Where that happens the divisions caused by selfishness will be overcome, and "all men" will see the love of Christ.⁶

Fred Kaan prays "for the healing of the nations" by the God whose great name has been written "on all mankind"; for the banning of pride and the "dogmas keeping man from man"; and for freedom from hate and war, that "men may come and go in peace."⁷

These hymns combine high poetic quality with religious depth and understanding. We can safely assume that none of them consciously downgrade women. Yet regularly they imply that females as well as males and brothers, and that women are adequately included and recognized when men are mentioned.

There are of course some significant recent hymns in which this identification does not appear, though few in which God is not designated by male images or pronouns. G.K.A. Bell's "Christ Is The King! O friends,

Rejoice" tells how "thousands of faithful men and true" were drawn to Christ in ancient times, but goes on to appeal to "Christian women, Christian men" today to follow the Way. In an interesting mingling of male and inclusive language Bell calls upon Christians to accept their apostleship:

Brothers and sisters, with one voice
make all men know he is your choice.⁸

Another exception appears in Percy Dearmer's characterization of God in a little-known hymn of adoration. He addresses God as Father throughout, but the opening stanza includes the mother image:

O Father above us, our father in might,
all live by thy love, as the flowers in the light;
our mother and father and maker art thou.
Forward! Forward ever, forward now!⁹

Ironically, some of the popular songs of celebration, which are cast in a folk idiom especially for Christians who want contemporary expressions of their faith, are as marked by masculine language as the hymns just cited. Even Peter Scholtes' "We Are One In The Spirit" speaks of guarding the worth and self-esteem of "each man."¹⁰ The refrain of Ray Repp's "All You Peoples, Clap Your Hands" relies heavily on terms like *mankind*, *fellow man*, *every man*, and *brotherhood*.¹¹

The problem surfaces with special clarity in "The Family Of Man" by Fred Dallas. Beginning with the joyful affirmation, "I belong to a family, the biggest family on earth," he speaks of men who do the world's work, of men who are his brothers, and of the constructive and destructive capacities of men, always assuming that women are included.¹²

A counterpart of exclusively male images of God and the generic use of *man* is the custom of using feminine

terms to refer to the church, abstract entities like truth, and physical realities such as nature and the earth. Inclusivists see in these usages reflections of a hierarchical social order in which males are dominant and females are subordinate. The divine power at the heart of the universe is conceived as masculine, whereas the entities that depend on God are regarded as feminine.

In "Before Jehovah's Awful Throne" Isaac Watts pictures the earth "with her ten thousand tongues" as filling the heavenly courts with praise. In Joseph Addison's "The Spacious Firmament

On High," the moon "nightly to the listening earth, / repeats the story of her birth." In "Once to Every Man and Nation" Lowell describes how noble it is to side with truth and "share her wretched crust, / ere her cause bring fame and profit"; and affirms the enduring strength of truth, "though her portion be the scaffold."

Portrayals of the church as feminine arouse the most concern. In exalting Christ as "the church's one foundation" Samuel J. Stone declares that "she is his new creation," sought by him "to be his holy bride." The application of the bridegroom-bride relation to Christ and the church grows out of a patriarchal understanding of marriage, and is therefore felt by many to help perpetuate an inferior status for women.

Timothy Dwight's "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord" consistently refers to the church with feminine pronouns, as in the third stanza:

For her my tears shall fall,
for her my prayers ascend,
to her my cares and toils be given,
till toils and cares shall end.

"Rise Up, O Men Of God" is especially questionable because its dominant maleness contrasts with the femininity of the church. "Her strength unequal to her task," she waits for the *men* of God to "rise up, and make her great"!

The employment of military and feudal images to refer to both God and human beings has also come under attack. The Vulgate translation of the Old Testament renders the Hebrew *adonai* with *dominus*, and the English translation of this word as *Lord* to designate God or Christ was probably influenced by the medieval relation of the feudal lord to his serfs and dependents. The term is therefore felt by many to reinforce male dominance in human society. Similarly, metaphorical references in hymns to captains, marching, hosts, armor, soldiers, and the like picture the Christian life in terms of functions typically regarded as male, and hence are seen as subordinating women.

Probably hymnists use *Lord* to describe or address God more often than any other term, with the possible exception of *Father*. Military metaphors are more frequently employed than we ordinarily realize. One recalls readily Luther's "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"; Shurtleff's "Lead On, O King Eternal," with its day of march, fields of conquest, battle song, and sin's fierce war; Coster's "March On, O Soul, With Strength!"; and How's "For All The Saints," which lauds the Lord who was "their captain in the well-fought fight," and which summons "soldiers, faithful, true and bold" to join "the countless host" of those who go on to victory.

Steps Toward Inclusiveness

The evidence now before us lends support to five observations: (1) Our hymns contain a disturbing amount of sexist language, which in subtle ways consigns women to a subordinate role in church and society. (2) Wherever possible, offensive words and phrases should be replaced with language that includes both sexes and recognizes their equality. (3) Wide disagreement can be expected regarding the desirability and nature of changes proposed. (4) Consideration of alterations in existing hymns should proceed according to carefully conceived guidelines. (5) The writing of new hymns using only inclusive language should be encouraged.

What can be done to make more inclusive the language of the hymns now available? Two guidelines are particularly relevant here.

1. Revision should preserve the basic meaning, meter, rhyme, and poetic style of the original. As Erik Routley has written: "The alteration must not produce something that labels the original author as a bad poet, a shoddy thinker, or an indifferent stylist."¹³

2. Hymns and stanzas should be seen wholistically, rather than only from the standpoint of sexist language. Little will be gained if we remove male-dominated terms while retaining others ethically more objectionable or empty of substance. One list of 51 nonsexist hymns includes at least nine that are seriously defective because of self-centered individualism, irresponsible otherworldiness, questionable atonement theories, or plain triviality. Possible changes in a given hymn should be weighed in relation to its total message.

For examples of revisions thoughtfully carried out, the reader is referred to *Because We Are One People*,

an imaginative rendering of 67 hymns in inclusive language; and *Everflowing Streams*, edited by Ruth C. Duck and Michael G. Bausch, which makes nonsexist language a major norm in its rewording of well-known hymns and its selection of other songs.¹⁴

Words Referring to Human Beings

It is relatively easy to find inclusive equivalents for masculine nouns, the main problem being that of accommodating changes to meter and rhyme. Even where a word with the same number of syllables does not suit, simple changes in phrases may accomplish the end sought. The words *man*, *men*, and *mankind* may be changed to *men and women*, *women and men*, *humanity*, *humankind*, *folk*, *kin*, *people*, *all people*, *all*, *all of us*, *one*, *ones*, *we/us/our*. *Man himself* can be rendered *people themselves*; *man's spirit* by *human spirit*.

By way of illustration, Fred Kaan's "hungry men of many lands" can easily become "hungry ones." In the familiar "Good Christian Men, Rejoice," *men* may be changed to *folk* or *friends*, or the opening words can be altered to "Good Christians all" or "People of Christ"; while the lines "and man is blessed forevermore" can be personalized to "we are blessed."

One revision completely recast the fourth stanza of Fosdick's "God of Grace and God of Glory"—the one that asks for armor of Christlike graces "in the fight to make men free," and for wisdom and courage "that we fail not man nor thee." The first of these lines becomes "in the journey to be free," and the second "ears to hear and eyes to see." However, the changed text is so radically different that it can hardly be regarded as satisfactory. It seems

impossible to find a nonsexist equivalent for "that we fail not man nor thee" which preserves the meter and does not change the sense. It may therefore be better to omit the stanza.¹⁵

Human fathers can be accurately described as parents or forebears. Some contexts may permit a recasting that makes them fathers and mothers. In revising "Faith Of Our Fathers," *Because We Are One People* uses "faith of our ancestors," "God of our parents," and "faith of the ages." In *Everflowing Streams* the first three stanzas are addressed respectively to the faith of "our fathers," "our mothers," and "our brothers, sisters too." In the *Lutheran Book of Worship* "fathers" is retained in two stanzas, but it is "the martyrs" who were "chained in prisons dark."

Sons may sometimes be changed to *children*, *heirs*, *sons and daughters*, or *daughters and sons*; while renderings of *sons of God* may incorporate any of these or use *people of God* or *God's people*. In *Because We Are One People* one of Watt's lines is amended quite acceptably: "Time like an ever-rolling stream/bears mortals all (instead of "all its sons") away." Worthy of note is a fifteenth-century Latin hymn by Jean Tisserand (d.1494) that forestalls modern inclusivist criticism by beginning "O filii et filiae"—"O sons and daughters." The translators add "Let us sing!"¹⁶

Brothers can sometimes by rephrasing become *sisters and brothers*, and occasionally *neighbors*, *friends*, or *kindred* may fit. *Brotherhood* presents serious difficulties, since *sisterhood* is hardly a comparable term. However, in some contexts *kinship*, *unity*, *harmony*, *neighborliness*, or *family* (of faith) may be serviceable. Erik Routley offers a constructive revision of a stanza of "In Christ There Is No

East Or West" which includes both *brothers and sons*:

Join hands, then, all who hold the faith,
whate'er your race may be;
who serves my Father cheerfully
is surely friend to me.¹⁷

In *Everflowing Streams* the second couplet has been changed to read:

all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

In some hymns the pronouns *he*, *his*, or *him* are used in reference to a singular antecedent noun; or *he*, referring to either an individual or humanity, is itself the subject. The simplest way to correct this masculinity is to pluralize the pronoun to *they*, *their*, or *them*. Thus Richard Baxter's "He Wants Not Friends That Hath Thy Love" becomes in *With One Voice* "They Lack Not Friends Who Have Thy Love." Percy Dearmer's "He Who Would Valiant Be," adapted from John Bunyan's "Who would true valour see," can be similarly revised. Thus the *Lutheran Book of Worship* begins with "All Who Would Valiant Be" and closes each stanza with "to be true pilgrims." These changes still leave a problem for those who are unhappy with "follow the Master." I therefore find it better to revert to Bunyan's first stanza, substituting plural pronouns and a slightly different last line. The opening stanza then becomes:

Who would true valor see,
let them come hither;
they here will constant be,
come wind, come weather.
There's no discouragement
shall make them once relent
their first-avowed intent
to live as pilgrims.

Words Designating God

Finding inclusive replacements for nouns and pronouns referring to God

poses special problems. The divine Spirit for Christian faith is neither male or female, but transcends sexual differences. Yet mainstream Christian teaching conceives of God according to the analogy of personality. Our total experience is more intelligible if we ground it ultimately in an activity with qualities somewhat akin to what we know as self-consciousness, reason, purposiveness, ability to realize values, and capacity for relationships with other persons. Love, forgiveness, and prayer, for example, are best understood on the personal plane. Hence personal language of some kind, however metaphorical, is most appropriate in worship. The problem, then, is how to find language that conserves the rich values of the personal analogy, without ascribing to God the maleness or femaleness that characterizes all finite persons, yet without making God an impersonal "it."

The difficulty centers in masculine words like Father, Lord, and King; in the maleness of the three "persons" of the Trinity; and in third-person masculine pronouns. The use of *Father* to refer to God has its drawbacks, since the actual human fathers of many worshipers are poor symbols of divine justice and love. For some children a father is likely to suggest abusiveness or tyranny. Yet the teaching and practice of Jesus, the centuries of use of the prayer he taught his disciples, and the time-honored acceptance of ideal fatherhood as a major image of the divine nature make continued use of the Father image inevitable.

There seems to be no adequate synonym. *Parent*, *ancestor*, and *forebear* lack the warmth and intimacy of the father-child relation. In some hymns slight changes in construction can achieve the desired end. For example,

one revision of "This is my Father's world" begins simply with "Our God has made this world"; the use of *our* retains much of the personal relationship of the original.¹⁸

Another possibility is to expand our thinking to include the mother image. Only deeply entrenched habit stands in the way: we are simply not accustomed to think of God in feminine terms. Our main words for God are the deposit of a still-powerful patriarchal tradition. Theologically, however, the mother symbol is no less warranted than the father image. Certainly the woman's role in giving birth to new life gives her a firm and important place in our thought of God as Creator. The Bible often uses feminine imagery to refer to God, as in Deut. 32:18; Isa. 42:14; 46:3-4; 66:13; Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34; 15:8-10. Hymns likewise extol qualities in God frequently thought of as feminine, such as mercy, patience, gentleness. These traits are not peculiarly male or female, but both, and we can recognize this by allowing both sexes to symbolize our understanding of the divine Spirit. Then we shall be able to address God the Father also as Mother.

Because We Are One People alters the first line of "Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind" to Dear Mother-Father of us all." Such a departure from customary usage will not come easily or rapidly, but if editors and hymn writers explore its possibilities, a change might gradually occur that would enrich our worship.

It seems unlikely that the use of the word *Lord* can be drastically reduced. Some changes can be readily made. For example, in one version of Kethe's "All People That On Earth Do Dwell," the words "sing to the Lord" become "sing unto God," and "the Lord our God" is changed to

"Yahweh our God"; while the stanza that begins "Know that the Lord is God indeed," and contains three uses of *he* and two of *his*, is omitted entirely.¹⁹ Nonsexist nouns can sometimes be substituted, such as Most High, Rock, Mighty One, our Strength, the Eternal, Liberator. Still, references to God as Lord are so integral a part of our English Scriptures and liturgies as well as our hymnody that removal of many of them from our hymns would be virtually impossible, while a few changes would have little impact. Such alteration in our hymns could not proceed without attention to phrases constantly used elsewhere in worship: the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord's Prayer, the Lord's Supper, and others. In The Psalms alone, God is addressed or described as Lord 766 times. In *100 Hymns for Today* there are 15 hymns beginning with Lord.

It is also doubtful whether alteration is in most cases necessary. Most worshipers are unaware of the original patriarchal connections of the English word and do not think of it as connoting masculine supremacy. British Christians are of course familiar with the House of Lords, but there is little in the experience of Americans today to suggest that this word supports the subordination of women. In fact, it seems more likely that the use of the term in common thought to designate human lordship is derived from its association with the divine than the other way around. Probably our best course is to use broadly synonymous terms wherever possible while frequently pointing out that calling God Lord does not mean that men are thereby accorded higher authority than women.

Much clearer is the need for close scrutiny of references to God as King, and to God's rule in terms of a

kingdom, since a king is unmistakably male, and since kingly exercise of power has often been the opposite of righteousness associated with the Ruler of heaven and earth. Fortunately, alternative words can often be used. God may be spoken of as Sovereign, Monarch, or Ruler, terms that designate queens no less than kings; and the functioning of divine authority can be described as rule, reign, sovereignty, or dominion. *Everflowing Streams* avoids both *Lord* and *King* in the opening lines of "Joy to the world!" by announcing: "The promised one / has come Shalom to bring." Even if *King* cannot always be altered felicitously, it can be offset by other nonsexist nouns. "O Worship The King" uses some of these: Shield, Defender, Ancient of Days, Maker, Redeemer, Friend. At least the last four are quite inclusive.

Serious difficulties remain. The kingdom of God has a prominent place in Jesus' teachings, and time-honored usage gives the term a fairly secure status. The adoration of the "King of kings and Lord of lords" in the Hallelujah Chorus of Handel's *Messiah* and other church music, along with its rootage in the book of Revelation, lends authority to the words. However, room remains for removing as many kings as possible from existing hymns, and for avoidance in new ones of any reference to human royalty.

The word *kingdom* is less questionable, since it refers to rule or reign, not to a king's geographical domain. A theologian as competent and as committed to women's liberation as Letty Russell speaks without inhibitions of "God's Kingdom."²⁰ Here again, frequent employment of other metaphors and careful interpretation of meanings may be our best way of eliminating or reducing sexism.

The Trinitarian language often employed in hymns explicitly or implicitly conveys a masculine image of God. This tendency is accentuated by the use of the formula in liturgical responses like doxologies and the Gloria Patri, the classical creeds of the church, and many collects used in corporate worship. Hence revisions of hymns are likely to have little effect unless they can be undertaken as part of a more comprehensive reexamination of the masculinity of traditional formulations of the Trinity. We may hope that church commissions on worship and other responsible leaders will give serious attention to this problem.

In preaching and teaching, alternatives to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit like Creator, Redeemer, and Life-giver, or Sustainer, Reconciler, and transforming Presence, may be constructively used, and occasionally these can be woven into hymns. One version of "Holy, Holy, Holy" substitutes for "God in three persons: blessed Trinity" the line "who wert and art, and evermore shalt be."²¹ Indispensable is forthright and imaginative interpretation which points out the metaphorical, non-literal nature of all our references to God and makes plain that none of our analogies accord the slightest superiority to either sex or ascribe human distinctions to the ultimate Source and Ground of all existence and value.

Masculine language cannot be avoided when referring to Jesus Christ. Jesus was a male, and the nouns used in the New Testament to refer to him are masculine: Messiah (Christ), Son, Son of God, Son of man. The Greek noun *logos* is also masculine, though the English equivalent, *Word*, is neuter. In a patriarchal culture it was virtually

inevitable that the event which aroused faith in God's distinctive incarnation in a specific human life should be the arrival of a child born as a male. Hence we cannot escape the masculinity of the words that root in the historic Jesus.

Attempts have been made to avoid this restriction, but with little success. One revision of "Angels We Have Heard On High" invites us to "come to Bethlehem and see/one whose birth the angels sing."²² The same editors amend "O Little Town Of Bethlehem" to make Christ explicitly feminine. The third stanza assures us that though we cannot see or hear "her coming,"

... if we will receive her still,
the Christ appears tonight.²³

Such an attempt to correct the New Testament writings—our only record of the historical Christ event—is unconvincing if not ludicrous. We may regret that God was not made manifest in a woman instead of a man, but we cannot ignore the only accounts we have. However, we can speak of Christ or the Son as the Word, or use other inclusive terms like Redeemer or reconciling Love. We can also emphasize that faith in the incarnation bears witness to God's redemptive action in a *human* life, with maleness or femaleness only incidental. Further, we can stress that divine Love continues to be revealed in manifold ways in human beings, without regard to their sex.

Probably the most frequently encountered form of sexist language referring to God is the use of the personal pronouns *he*, *him*, and *his*. Often this problem can be solved by the substitution of nouns for the masculine pronouns, or the use of the adjective *divine* for the possessive *his*. Thus *his* power, mercy, or love can

become *divine*, though contextual changes may be needed to maintain the meter. John M. Mulder illustrates how sexism can be eliminated from prose by a passage from Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. Niebuhr wrote: "But faith in God as will and personality depends upon faith in His power to reveal Himself." The rewritten sentence speaks simply of "faith in the divine power of revelation."²⁴

A stanza from Isaac Watts declares,

His sovereign power, without our aid,
made us of clay, and formed us men;
and, when like wandering sheep we
strayed,
he brought us to his fold again.

A perceptive pamphlet by the Community Council of Wesley Theological Seminary offers a revision which removes both *men* and the masculine pronouns for God:

God's sovereign power, without our aid,
formed and created us of clay;
and, when like wandering sheep we
strayed,
God brought us back into the way.²⁵

"All People That On Earth Do Dwell," a paraphrase by William Kethe of Psalm 100, extends the invitation:

him serve with mirth, his praise
forth tell,
come ye before him and
rejoice.

In *Because We Are One People* there is a felicitous alteration:

— Come serve with mirth, your praise
forth tell,
O come ye peoples and rejoice.

Abstract and Personified Entities

Where changes are desired to remove the suggestion of subordination in entities treated as feminine—e.g., truth, nature, the earth, Israel,

the church—a neuter pronoun or a definite or indefinite article can often serve. Thus in "For The Beauty Of The Earth" the church can offer *one* or *a* (instead of *her*) "pure sacrifice of love." When we contrast the church's endurance with that of kings and empires, we need not sing, "Immovable she stands." The church as an *it* can stand just as unyielding. The same hymn sings of "her goodly battlements," of "her foundation strong," and of "her unending song." In each case *its* can replace *her*, and if it seems incongruous to speak of an impersonal *it* as singing, we can declare,

We hear within the solemn voice
of ceaseless, grateful song.

If Change Is Impossible

During the present period of transition, when people of faith are seeking wider inclusiveness in all respects, there is great need for openness, creativity, imagination, and sensitivity to sincere differences. With regard to sexist language, it is imperative that a broad spectrum of feeling and opinion be consulted representing both inclusivists and upholders of the status quo, with full opportunity for discussion of the desirability as well as the nature of proposed changes. In local churches individuals may be invited to suggest alternative lines and stanzas. Workshops may be held in which people are encouraged to write original hymns and are guided in the process.

In many instances it will be found impossible to revise existing hymns or stanzas so as to remove all sexist language. Where this occurs, at least five courses of action are open.

1. Stop using the hymn. Erik Routley finds that relatively few hymns would need to be dropped so that he would be sorry to miss!²⁶

2. Omit the offending stanza, provided that the rest of the hymn is poetically and theologically acceptable, and the deletion does not destroy connected meaning.

3. Use the questionable passage, but carefully interpret the fundamental meaning behind those apparently conveyed.

4. Encourage worshipers to do their own interpretation. This may lead some to omit singing words or lines they cannot honestly voice. Or it may enable them to join in singing while inwardly saying in effect, "Though these are not the words I would use, by singing them I really mean . . ." Fred Kaan, admitting that in spite of recent efforts his hymns still contain some sexist language, hopes that people may sometimes go in for what he calls "back-of-the-head-asterisk singing." He reports that for years, feeling his oneness with the worshipping church, family and wanting to be part of its corporate celebration, he has recited the historic creeds "with a number of mental reservations and footnotes."²⁷ Some of us may find mental asterisks a helpful way of deriving benefit from otherwise bothersome hymns. Even if we cannot change the words, we can *think* inclusively as we sing them.

5. In planning worship, balance hymns containing masculine language with a preponderance of inclusivist lyrics, or ask those responsible for leadership in worship to do so.

Notes

1. Letty M. Russell, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective—A Theology* (Westminster Press, 1974), p. 94.
2. BHUM 11; HCW 8; UCC 11.

3. OHT* 8.

4. AHB 418; BH 274; BHB 659; BHUM 408; BOP 111; CH 505; CP 171; EP* 101; HE 258; HMC 525; HSM* 9; MH 198; OHT* 13; PH 198; UCC 143;

- WBP 326; WOV 179.
5. LBW 409; OHT* 82; PP 8; WOV 569.
 6. OHT* 23; WOR 77; WOV 567.
 7. "For the healing of the nations." BOP 595; HC 210; OHT* 28; PL 294; PT* 20; WOR 82.
 8. AM 812; BHB 356; BOP 316; CH 474; CLB 304; CP 365; HCW 355; HE 543; LBW 386; OHT* 12; STP 64; UCC 159; WOR 44.
 9. HCW 10.
 10. BHUM* 975; *Genesis Songbook*, 34; MHSS* 35; PL 296; *Songbook for Saints and Sinners*, 5; WBP 619-620.
 11. *Hymns for Now*, Vol. I, 16.
 12. *Faith, Folk and Clarity*, 20.
 13. Erik Routley, "Sexist Language," p. 6.
 14. *Because We Are One People: Songs for Worship* (Chicago: Ecumenical Women's Centers, 1974); *Everflowing Streams: Songs for Worship*, ed. by Ruth C. Duck and Michael G. Bausch (Pilgrim Press, 1981). Additional resources: *A New Hymnal*, ed. by Stephen Roe; *The Shalom Hymnal*, ed. by Grace Moore.
 15. BWOP 29; ES 14.
 16. AM 130; BBC 110; BHUM 451; BOP 194; CH 277; CLB 279; CP 724; EH 626; HC 467; HCW 179; HE 99; PCH 168; PH 191; WBP 527; WOR 312; WOV 281.
 17. Routley, "Sexist Language," p. 10.
 18. BWOP 20.
 19. BWOP 17.
 20. Russell, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective*, p. 138.
 21. HCL 4.
 22. BWOP 43.
 23. BWOP 49.
 24. John M. Mulder, "A Non-Sexist Style Guide," *Theology Today*, Vol. 34 (1977-78), p. 446.
 25. Second stanza of "Before Jehovah's Awful Throne." "Toward More Inclusive Language in the Worship of the Church," Washington, D. C.: Wesley Theological Seminary, Feb. 1979.
 26. Routley, "Sexist Language," p. 5.
 27. Fred Kaan, "Emerging Language in Hymnody," an address at the 1980 Convocation of the Hymn Society of America, Princeton, N.J., June 10, 1980, p. 7.

Now is the time to renew your HSA membership for 1984! When you renew, consider giving a membership to a clergyperson, a church musician, or your church's library. Send your order to the Hymn Society of America, Wittenberg University, Springfield, OH 45501.

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The Language of Hymnody

Christopher Idle



Christopher Idle graduated in English from Oxford University and was ordained in the Church of England in 1965. The author of some 70 published hymns, he has been Rector of Limehouse, London since 1976.

Do not be misled by innocent titles. This is not merely a study of what is, but a plea for what should be—arising from my share in *Hymns for Today's Church* (Hodder, London 1982) and its apologia *Hymns in Today's Language* (Grove, Nottingham, 1982).

The hymnal (622 items) blazes a radical trail by transforming "thou" to "you." The booklet (24 pages) faces five arguments against this policy—of which the "Wesleyan objection" appeals most to our critics. John's 1779 Preface has frequently been leveled at us; but his insistence on the untouchability of his own and his brother's hymns may seem endearing or repellent; he should be the last person to complain of editorial doctoring.

Even our most popular hymns have no standard text. England's two dominant books have identical versions of scarcely half the hymns they share. A line-count shows a 15% variation, although the hymnals' ecclesiastical stance is close. Books with diverse aims or foundations show much greater differences.

Even this measurement overlooks omitted or rearranged stanzas: of the "identical" hymns, some differ in most other hymnals, or change an author's text, or (since no other books include them) are dispensable anyway.

When editorial committees start to establish any text where there is room for doubt, what principles guide

them? Without recommending some universal esperanto of worship, I suggest that the same language tests apply to any century.

1. *Controlled Flair* is the supreme mark of the Wesleyan hymns; sometimes Charles provides the flair, John the control. Both are required in hymns which hope to last; this means:

a) *Allusion without confusion*

Hymns are mainly for the family, the committed, and refer to family occasions, stories, names, from earlier generations. But only if the present members share the secret! We know Israel and Egypt, Bethlehem and Calvary; but some riddles need avoiding or revising—particularly if they depend on the King James Version, or none at all.

"Desire of Nations" survives, being meaningful whatever its origin; we cannot now accept "When Smyrna's candle shone of old/The seer on Patmos dreamed." The borderline is narrow; but we value the power of Timothy Dudley-Smith's recent" . . . and make of life's brief journey / a new Emmaus road."

b) *Sparkle with dazzle*

We need newness in hymns, but no shock; extended vision, not overwhelming glare. Charles Wesley again: "Spirit of holiness/Let all thy saints adore/Thy sacred energy, and bless/Thy heart-renewing power." And Brian Wren achieves it in "We strain to glimpse thy mercy seat/and

find you kneeling at out feet." Lesser writers do cleverer things, but hymns must exalt the savior, not his scribe.

2. *Educated taste* sounds snobbish; yet how vital is this indefinable component! Individual lines may be defended from Scripture, history, and dictionary; but if they fail here, no human power can save them.

a) *Formality without monotony*

Protest songs sting, lullabies soothe: hymns give shared expression to shared experience, and must not leave half a congregation cold. We cannot endure dullness—"Give peace and joy and love/As in the realms above"—nor the artful colloquialism of Donne or the subtler musings of Herbert. The poet in us must be allowed to sing, within the disciplines of vocabulary and form which seem constricting, but whose reward (as with the best of Isaac Watts) is long service among the redeemed community.

b) *Reliability without predictability*

The classic hymns soar on some daring flights, and the new ones are not without them. "Welcome to another day: night is blinded!" cries Michael Seward. But our flights must not be merely fanciful; hymnals are not laboratories for doctrinal experiment, and believers require confidence in what they sing. William Blake was not normally writing hymns; nor was the author of "My prime Concern, yet wholly Other; my Mother-Father, my Sister-Brother . . ."

c) *Relevance without extravagance*

The latest space-probe or TV headline may feature in prayers or sermons; but hymns which try to freeze a fragment of today soon savour of yesterday. "God of the vast computer's thought, Lord of the fetus we abort" will not be sung tomorrow; there are no clichés like the newest

ones. But David Mowbray is timeless and contemporary: "Lord of our middle years, giver of steadfastness/courage that perserveres when there is small success . . ."

3. *Balanced spirituality* is a test indeed—an equilibrium with many parts; editorial groups need human variety if they are to serve a catholic church. We need:

a) *Dependence without cringing*

The old "wormy" hymns have perished (our revisions rescue some!) but we still meet lines like "I nothing have, I nothing am/Lost in thy grace, O bleeding Lamb." The 19th century erred most here; we now celebrate strength and recognize weakness. "O God, our help in ages past" is totally dependent, never pitiable.

b) *Defiance without snarling*

In a forgotten line (our revision restores it!) Wesley wrote "Where's thy victory, boasting grave?" In similar spirit of psalm and prophet, Michael Perry retranslates *Ein feste Burg*: "So let the powers accursed/come on and do their worst . . ." Contrast these with the bravado of others who love to castigate Christians: "Our stagnant bigotry disturb, our stale complacency destroy/Unmake, O God, your coward church, that it may foul the earth no more." We are back with the protest, on the road to pomposity—which like sarcasm, bad temper, and even humor, has no place in hymns. We cannot sing the same joke, or the same sermon, twice a year; cringing and snarling are that much worse.

The language of hymnody, unlike the subtitles above, employs few abstractions and polysyllables—the despair of choirs and the distraction of worshippers. But like my headings, it will have a recognizable pattern, not altogether even; absolutely level rhythm is doggerel. Varied verbs

combine with vivid nouns and (only) vital adjectives; but writers check such nuts and bolts after their first draft, not before.

The "successes" I quote come from hymns young, old, and born-again; the "failures" are anonymous—not

to spare their authors, but because I made them up. I fear to quote someone's favorite as typical of the foolish or the nasty! But my inventions may be recognizable specimens whose cousins we know. Let us mind our language when we magnify our Lord!

The Battered Bartered Bride

Helen Bruch Pearson



Helen Bruch Pearson is Director of Programs and Administrator for Cannon Chapel, Emory University, and coordinates Candler School of Theology liturgical events and worship services. Formerly a public school music teacher and church choir director, she holds the B.S. in music education from the University of Kansas and the

M.Div. from Candler School of Theology, Atlanta.

A recent bent toward inclusive language in church and society today has given rise to a critical re-examination of hymn texts. This is apparent in the strident search for sexist expressions with exclusive imagery and the corresponding effort to substitute or eliminate their use. Interestingly enough, many persons who refuse to sing texts that incorporate offensive imagery and sexist language embrace, as their favorites, texts that perpetuate imperious theology and exclusivistic doctrine. If nothing else, the current work with language and text points to a dialectic. Decisions about the use of inclusive/exclusive language cannot be made separate and apart from a re-evaluation of the Church's theological stance and dogmatical beliefs that are also revealed in its hymn texts. Like biblical

exegesis that asks certain questions about the text, perhaps we should engage more frequently in hymnic exegesis.

For years, I have sung "The Church's One Foundation" with devotion and commitment but without questioning the theology expressed in the text. Why should I? After all, the definitive words about the Church's one foundation were used: Church, Bride, Jesus Christ, and God the Three in One. More recently, however, I have been confronted by this text and questions about the text have been raised. What does it reveal about the doctrine of the Church? Does the text provide the foundation for an adequate ecclesiology? Is its explicit and implicit theological message an impediment to and for the Church?

The Church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is his new creation
by water and the word.
From heaven he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation,
yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation,
one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses,
partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
with every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder
men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder,
by heresies distressed;
Yet saints their watch are keeping
their cry goes up, How long?
And soon the night of weeping
shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
of peace forevermore;
Till with the vision glorious,
her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious
shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union
with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
with those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy!
lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly,
on high may dwell with thee. Amen.¹
Samuel J. Stone, 1866

This hymn text of Samuel J. Stone's is one of 12 he wrote, each based on a different article of the Apostles' Creed. The ninth article, entitled "The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints. He is the Head of the Body, the Church,"² is the foundation for this particular text. It

is a doctrinal debate and was written in 1866 as a "rigid assertion of High Church dogma in disdainful opposition to those who were embracing the liberating accents of science and the higher criticism."³ As the Church has become more aware of moral and ethical issues and crises that demand

human dignity and greater equitable justice, the theological orientation reflected in the hymn text has also changed. The spurious allusions in the third stanza have been omitted and "... the parts of the hymn now remaining in use constitute a sound lyrical exposition of what most Christians believe about the church."⁴ What most Christians believe about the Church does not always reflect a true or clear image of what the Church should be. The danger lies in the fact that what most Christians believe has a tendency to become synonymous with truth and right and their particular brand of church. It is precisely the hint of this kind of special-interest theology, presented as Church doctrine and affirmed in the text, that troubles me. I suspect that when a religious concept, idea or doctrine becomes comfortably accepted or complacently understood by most Christians, its biting and prophetic truth has been misunderstood.

An appraisal of the hymn under question reveals the expository text is built on images of the Church as recorded in the New Testament. Similarities are found in I Corinthians 3:11 where it is stated there can be no foundation other than Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:23ff proclaims that Christ is the head of the Church and implicitly suggests that the Church is his wife, a new creation, sanctified and made holy by, washing of water with the word. Revelation 21:9 is more explicit and calls the New Jerusalem, the Church, the wife of the Lamb.

The book of Revelation, in its entirety, contains enough imagery to match up with the rest of the hymn text. In the biblical text, recall that after the marriage supper of the Lamb and his Bride, a "vision glorious" of a

new heaven and a new earth is seen. In this place, there is a river of the water of life and a tree of life with its leaves for the healing of the nations. The foundation and charter of this city is salvation. In spite of toil and tribulation and war, the promise of peace is consummated. We are told that the gates of the New Jerusalem, the Church, are never closed during the day and there is no night for the Lord God is the light leading the Elect. The Elect are the only ones allowed entrance into the city, the holy sanctuary of the Church. Judgment is pronounced as to whom the Elect really are; . . . "only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." No one else is accepted for membership in this exclusive New Jerusalem Country Club with its touted open-gate policy, its twin source of life, and its perpetual daylight savings time. Victory is sweet . . . the Church is at peace . . . day is done . . . gone the Sor . . . all is well . . . the Church is at rest . . . and bored to death.

In this restful state of the Church on earth, there is purportedly a continuous relationship with God and also mystic sweet communion with all the holy and happy Elect who somehow got their names recorded in the book of life and made it through the gate. Of course, the wonderment for those of us left behind occupying time and space is: How on earth can be assured that my name gets recorded in the Lamb's heavenly book in that Great Computer in the sky? At the end of the final stanza, the recognition slowly dawns.

Perhaps, just perhaps, there is more to living and dying than getting our names in the book and on the roll. Perhaps the Lamb's way is not something we control by all our striving and working toward eternal enroll-

ment. In recognition of that merciful and personal intercession, made by Christ, the prayer forms . . . "Lord, give us grace that we, . . ." Grace, that gift from God who elects to freely love us all as though there was only one of us to love. By the very nature of grace, the gift makes us all equally loved and thus, all Elect.

Why the Church, then?

Let me go back to my comment that the imagery of the Church in this specific hymn text is related directly to the New Testament imagery. While it is accurate to refer to New Testament imagery, these images are not readily found in any of the gospel writings. The evangelists are close to silent when it comes to institutional Church talk. Matthew is the only one who has any directive comments to make about the Church and its mission; this is thought to be an emendation at the end of his gospel. The parables never suggest an original Church structure claimed by Jesus. They always point beyond Jesus to God and to God's rule as discerned in God's purposes for creation and the actions of God in the midst of that creation. One conclusion that can be posited about the Church is that it was an outgrowth of the resurrection community as it attempted to deal with the trauma of the resurrection, the unsolvable dilemma of the ascension, and the failure of the promised arrival of the Kingdom.

In the months and years following Pentecost, when it became apparent that the Parousia was not imminent, the Christian movement wanted to be recognized as one of the prominent emerging new religions of the day. In its attempt to legitimize the Church's fringe existence and to gain greater acceptance in the Greco-Roman world, there may have been the tendency to change and compromise the

sayings and teachings of Jesus in order to make them less offensive and less scandalous. Without the visibility of its miracle worker, the resurrection community had to have a palatable message and an organized structure out of which to work if it intended to go and make disciples of all nations. The Church did not waste much time in becoming an established and entrenched system. Strange . . . Jesus, in his life and ministry, spoke out strongly against rigid and inflexible religious structures. All this leaves me unconvinced that the birth of the Church was the all encompassing passionate reason for which Christ died. The kind of christology found in the hymn text does not have sufficient merit for an adequate ecclesiology as far as I am concerned.

No single doctrine, even christology, can serve the needs of the entire Church as it confesses its faith and celebrates the intention of the Christian experience. Christology is only one side of the double polarity of the doctrine of the Church. The other side is pneumatology. If based only on christology, the Church is encapsuled in an entombed reality. Left to human resources, the Church's cornerstone becomes its tombstone. The pneumatic dimension goes beyond structure and calls the Church forth into dynamic relationships that seek to unite individuals, wherever they are, with God. Christology reveals that which has already been accomplished through Christ. Pneumatology points to that which is yet to be realized in the Church and the world through the Spirit. This kind of necessary tension is not suggested in the hymn text under consideration.

The awareness of this double polarity brings body trauma to the contemporary Church as it tries to

stand with one foot in the past, which has already been and one foot in the future, which is yet to come. Like the first-century Church, the 20th-century Church continues to feel the same stress and strain as it stands with one foot in the world, which is present reality and one foot in the Kingdom, which resists full manifestation until the end time. The work of the Spirit is transformation in the present moment between the times of past and future and world and Kingdom. Christ is the reference point for this transformation. But if the Church was called into being by the revelation of God in Christ, then it must be sustained by the Spirit. And if the Church is sustained by the Spirit, the Spirit's work must be anchored in Christ. Neither christology nor pneumatology, when separated, provide an adequate ecclesiology. It takes both of them together.

This double polarity of christology and pneumatology acts somewhat as a check and balance system within the Church. It keeps the Church from making the skewed claim that there is no salvation outside the Church. The Church must continually confess that while it is bound to Christ, neither Christ nor his Spirit are confined or bound to the Church. Christ lived and died for the entire world and all humanity of which the Church is only a part. Perhaps a better way of understanding the Christian claim is to say that there is no salvation outside God's work in Christ. This moves salvation beyond the confines of the sanctuary and holds the Church before the world as only one part of God's redeeming word.

The Church is reminded by this

double polarity that it is not the Savior of the world. It cannot offer the gift of regeneration. It cannot save souls. Rather, it is called to point to the reality of the saving works of the Spirit in and through Christ. Nor can the Church insist that it exists to take Christ to the world. The world already belongs to Christ. The more difficult task for the Church is to meet Christ in the world where the Spirit has already forged the way. Without an ecclesiology that communicates Christ and Spirit to the world and its people, the Church remains shallowly ineffective and nonproductive.

Christology and pneumatology call the Church to be in a state of formation and re-formation in every new time and situation. If the hymn text had pneumatology as a counterpoint, or even pedal point, to its christology, the dissonances would not sound so harsh. Without this interplay between the two doctrinal melodies, there is no satisfactory cadence of resolution. The doctrine of the Church as expressed in "The Church's One Foundation," remains a "rigid assertion of High Church dogma . . ." In the text, the Church, with its prominent insistence of self-importance, makes of the Trinity a diminished fourth rather than a Major Third.

Notes

1. Sir Frederick Bridge (ed.), *The Methodist Hymn-Book with Tunes* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1904), p. 572.
2. Fred D. Gealy, Austin C. Lovelace, and Carlton R. Young, *Companion to the Hymnal* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970), p. 389.
3. Harry Eskew and Hugh T. McElrath, *Sing with Understanding* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980), p. 61.
4. *ibid.*, p. 62.

Sexual Imagery and Our Language of Devotion

Roy Reed



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The evolving emancipation of women in our time has involved a logical and inevitable revolution of our use of language; this is gradually becoming obvious in the language one hears and uses in church. There remains some confusion and several areas of disagreement.

There is generally agreement that *human-language* in liturgy and hymnody should change, that there is no sensible justification to use exclusively male language to refer to both sexes. The changes this requires in the hymnody seem to trouble people most, but hymns are an art of utility and many of those we love best have been altered over the years.¹

There is no similar agreement concerning *God-language*. Many, in the name of sexual equality, refuse to refer to God in masculine terms. Others see this refusal, especially concerning the word "Father," and our traditional trinitarian language, as simply heresy.²

The "dis-ease" over sexual imagery extends to every aspect of its use. So in *Everflowing Streams*³ by Ruth Duck and Michael Bausch, a contemporary songbook, in "The Church's One Foundation," the phrase "Jesus Christ her Lord" is altered to read "Christ, God's own true child." All references to the church as "she" are changed. This, of course, results in quite a different hymn. In this same songbook all references to God as

Lord or King are deleted. "One Lord, one faith, one birth," becomes "One God, one faith, one birth." "Come and behold him born the king of angels" becomes "Come and behold the fond desire of nations." Notice in that line that the reference to Christ as "him" has also been changed. This alteration is maintained consistently. In "Joy to the world," the phrase "the glories of his righteousness" becomes "the glories of the ways of peace." Elsewhere, "Ox and ass before him bow" becomes "Ox and ass before Christ bow." In Fosdick's "God of Grace and God of Glory," "scorn thy Christ, assail his ways" becomes "scorn thy Christ, assail your ways." There is, to say the least, no small disagreement over these kinds of changes.

With many possible changes in contention, one of the areas of disagreement becomes disagreement itself. How shall we manage the disagreement? Who decides the changes we will make? Is *all* "sexist" language in worship to change now? Shall we have choices, different language for different people—a kind of pronoun warfare? Shall we acknowledge an interim period in which all will endure some compromise for the common good?

Studies have shown that, while many people and groups are agitating for what is called an inclusive (non-sexist) language in liturgy and hym-

nody, most people in our congregations are indifferent to or oppose these changes.⁴ In spite of this fact these changes are going to take place and most of the important battles over this matter have already been won. This will become clear in time as the denominations publish more.

While I welcome the change we are making in the language we use to refer to one another—as men and women—I believe that there are serious theological questions about the changes being made in the God-language, questions which seem to me to be seldom raised. But God-language should surely receive a thorough theological consideration.

What is at issue, of course, is the exclusively masculine reference to God, particularly as Father. The corrective to this excessive masculinity is usually to substitute neuter imagery for God. "Creator," "Parent," "Rock," etc., can substitute for "Father" and repetition of "God" can substitute for male pronouns.

Because "Father" is an anthropomorphism, a human way of speaking about the eternal and the inexpressible, some say that if the metaphor offends, cut it out. None of the ways we have of speaking about God is absolute; it is all imagery. Pick another image.

It is true that all theology is in some sense human projection; we will and must think of God symbolically in human terms—even anthropomorphically. The question is not shall we think of God in human terms, but what metaphors are apt? To speak of the God of universes, galaxies, suns, and all that energizes earth as masculine—or feminine—is admittedly to speak, in part, anthropomorphically. But is this a forced metaphor? When we speak of God we are speaking of our creation and

nature; what metaphor could be more appropriate than father—or mother?

What we have at stake in calling God "Father" is very great indeed. It is the primary *personal* image we have of God. We need to consider very carefully whether we wish to replace personal imagery of God with impersonal imagery in the language of our prayer and praise, because that is what we are doing when we delete the word "Father." "Creator," "Eternal One," "Rock," and even "Parent" is not the language of personal address.

Traditionally in Christian faith the language of prayer has been a language of intimacy. When we had a set of pronouns for intimate address we used them in prayer; and "thee" and "thou" have continued as language of prayer long after they dropped from everyday conversation. Intimacy—personal relationship—is no longer clear in the pronouns of prayer; this is but one reason why it should be clear in the nouns.

Jesus used intimate language for prayer—so intimate as to be embarrassing to most of us. He called God *abba*, an Aramaic equivalent of daddy. The matter of supreme importance here is not, I believe, that the image is masculine, but that it is intimate and communicates to us that God is close at hand, caring and personal. When we decide, in the language of our liturgy and hymnody, to neuter God we threaten our understanding of God as personal, loving, and intimate.

The metaphor of God as Father—or Mother—is important to this understanding. To say that God is like a Father or a Mother establishes fathering and mothering as a fundamental instrumentality of human faith in God. Some psychologists and social

scientists tell us today that this is so. Consider, for instance, the conclusions of James Fowler:

Biologists and psychologists have documented what sensitive observers have known for a long time: The neonate brings to the initial encounter with the caring one pre-patterned reflexes for searching and sucking, and for behaviors which recruit and love the tenderness of the carer. Recent research in endocrinology clarifies some of the remarkable shifts in hormonal levels which women experience during pregnancy and immediately after childbirth. These shifts, it is claimed, create powerful propensities in the new mother to be recruited into the child's nurture. This mutuality of need, and of need to be needed gives rise to the most primal experience of communion and place we experience. Because it comes first, and because it responds to our most profound situation of separation and lack, it inevitably assumes, for the individual and the species, a paradigmatic power. Whatever the quality of its mutuality, this primal relationship of newborn child with the one (or ones) providing the first tangible gifts of care and regard, leaves a charged residue of sedimented "sense" about one's value and about one's place. The seeds of self-hood take first and most lasting root in that charged relational sediment. Into it also drop the potent seeds of the child's pre-images of "how it is here."⁵

Erik Erikson is likewise fascinated with this human "sense of hallowed presence." He understands this *numinous* "sense" as part of the human experience of *basic trust* and sees the first year of life as crucial to the establishing of this "sense." It is created, Erikson says, in the ritual-life which exists between infant and car-

ing one, where, as he puts it, the new born is "lifted up into the very bosom of the divine," and experiences the "separateness transcended" and "distinctiveness confirmed" which is the very basic of a sense of self—of a sense of "I."⁶

Erikson risks the conclusion that this "sense" transcends a strictly personal dimension and is an awareness "that all 'I's are joined in a shared faith in one all-embracing 'I am'." This is, I take it, exactly what James Fowler means when he says that the primal relation between new born and caring one provides "the first tangible gifts of care and regard . . . about one's value and one's place" and establishes the child's pre-images of "'how it is here'."

What Erikson calls basic trust, and what we Christians call faith, are not different things. What happens to us all in our first year of life, in that primal relationship we have to those who provide love and food and comfort is crucial for our faith, and that indeed includes faith in God. It is not surprising that our basic metaphor for God is that of a parent. When we set about to delete or dilute this image in our language of praise and prayer we are doing destructive theological work, destroying a crucial basis of faith.

What we need as constructive theological work at this point is the creation of new language of praise and prayer which in naming and addressing God will not eliminate the masculine, but will accentuate the feminine. Not everyone can accept this suggestion. As I noted earlier, some have said that to tamper with our masculine imagery for God is a matter of heresy. I doubt that this is so.

In our Hebraic tradition God is transcendent, beyond limitation and

without a name, and is spoken of only in images. As Brian Wren put it recently in *The Hymn*, since "all we know about God is by analogical, metaphorical means—there's no reason why we shouldn't use feminine images of God as well as masculine."⁷ After all, if we can affirm with Genesis that God made us male and female "in his own image," we are bound to affirm that the image of God is masculine and feminine. If that metaphor is apt in one direction it must be in the other.

While it is true that one sees in the Old Testament, as part of the struggle of monotheism, a long struggle to suppress worship of the goddess and goddesses which was implicit in Canaanite worship, it is also true that the Bible uses many obviously female images to reveal the character of God.

Numbers 11:12. Was it I who conceived all this people; was it I who gave them birth, that you should say to me, "Carry them in your bosom, like a beloved little mother with a baby at the breast.

Deuteronomy 32:18. You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you and you forget the God who writhed in labor pains with you.

Jeremiah 31:20. Is Ephraim my Dear Son? My Darling Child? For the more I speak of him, the more do I remember him. Therefore, my womb trembles for him; I will truly show motherly compassion upon him.

And the passage from Isaiah that Brahms made memorable in his *Requiem*: Isaiah 66:12-13. For thus says Yahweh . . . Like a son comforted by his mother, so will I comfort you.

There are many similar passages. One can look them up in a resource such as Leonard Swidler's *Biblical Affirmation of Women*, Westminster, 1979. In

these passages God is mother. If we may use the image, why may we not use the title?

Wisdom in the Old Testament is a feminine dimension of God that has a separate existence as an expression of God. The Christology of Colossians, Hebrew, even the Gospel of John, is unthinkable without this female concept of Wisdom.

I have on the wall of my office an icon of Psalm 45. It is of the Stroganov school of painting of the early 17th century and very detailed. This psalm is actually about the king and his bride. It is in praise of them, not God, but the painter of the icon didn't know this; he reads the psalm as most of the faithful have, as the praise of God. The painter employs the images he knows and interprets: the "she" as Wisdom. The analogy to New Testament Christology is clear: to him and he paints Christ in the form of Wisdom—a female form.

What I am saying is that the direction I am indicating—that we need to employ a language of praise and prayer that will dare to discover female imagery for the being and the expression of God—is not down an entirely untraveled road. I see no reason to think of it as an heretical venture. It is but a logical extension of directions already taken. Theology, liturgy, hymnody, are not marble monuments; they are living expressions of faith and they are perennially on pilgrimage.

What common sense can it really make to speak of God as a parent—to speak of the God of creation and nurture—and speak entirely of Father? Isn't that absurd? Hasn't it always been absurd? And are we not in our present situation not out of theological necessity but out of centuries of cultural discrimination? I think we are.

In a practical sense, what should a pattern of reform look like?

1. It is unreasonable to expect liturgical language to reform itself except through a process. That means we shall have to live in an interim time and live with compromises. The failure to recognize this and accept partial solutions creates, itself, a great deal of resistance to change in the language of Zion.

We sometimes confuse resistance to change with resistance to the changes we would like to see. Many people who are sensitive to the values achieved for women in our time are not necessarily eager to change word-structures in worship which are precious to them and which they have been living with all their lives.

My older daughter, a very modern woman, was reading a contemporary language New Testament recently and was incensed to have read her way through *The Lord's Prayer* and not to have recognized it. She was, about this matter, instinctively conservative. People become attached to the formulas of liturgy and we are foolish when we ignore this fact and try to make reform instant and total.

2. We should change our human-language in all our liturgy and hymnody when possible and as fast as possible. Sometimes the changes which occur to us for particular texts are so abrupt and awkward that it is better to keep the old language until we find a better way. The world won't end and the people will be grateful.

I think it is divisive and destructive to set up a pronoun warfare in the congregation. Better than asking people to change "men" to "folk" in the second line of verse three and "Father" to "Mother" in the third one of stanza four, "if you feel comfortable doing that," is to print the

revised text and put it in people's hands. People usually will accept the new version, but they hate to choose up sides with pronouns and even worse, hate to sing a hymn worrying all the while whether they will create some terrible offense in the "which line was it of whatever stanza."

3. In our God-language it is crucial, for reasons I have indicated, to continue to pray and to sing to God as Father. And we must begin to employ female imagery for this purpose. I believe that the simplest and most acceptable first step to take in this process is to use the images now available to us in Scripture.

4. Some masculine imagery in the God-language, like "king," "kingdom," "Lord," "shepherd," etc., is now essentially archaic language, specifically understood as language of praise and prayer and, since it is language abundant in the Bible, ought to be left alone. Not all translation needs to be done on the printed page. The mind can translate this imagery in an appropriate way, especially when it is language we ordinarily do not use outside of worship.

5. It is easy to see why many women object to the image of the church as the bride of Christ. Since Christ is the head of the church and the Lord of the church, the image sets up a model of marriage that is problematic for many people. Erik Routley points out that the image is an analogy which asserts that the same intimacy exists between Christ and the church as exists between God and Christ, and then he asks, "Can't the church be a liberated bride?"⁸ The question behind that question, however, is, "Just how liberated from Christ do you want the church to be?" St. Paul may be in as much trouble here as he is with his futile advice

that women should keep silent in church.

I hope someone will help us out here, though because I really hate what Ruth Duck did to "The Church's One Foundation."

6. We need to realize that when we get "inclusive" enough, we get "exclusive."

There is on the staff of the seminary where I teach a shy man who rarely takes leadership in the chapel. He took his turn at this recently, and because he is an older and a conservative man he led—from the point of view of the issue we are now considering—an unreconstructed liturgy. After chapel he was "attacked" by several people. He was terribly hurt by this and responded that perhaps he shouldn't conduct worship in the chapel anymore. The reply he heard was, "Good!" This is the place where inclusive becomes exclusive.

It seems to me that in the institution where I work we ought to be able to *include* this sweet but old-fashioned man. When our norms of acceptance are so narrow that we cannot tolerate the "deviation" represented by this man, we have ceased to have "inclusive" as our concern and have opted instead for conformity. I

doubt that this is a suitable Christian goal.

Christians have survived many crisis, indeed revolutions, of language. Those we have experienced, and are experiencing in our own time, are not less momentous than those of the 16th century. They often seem trivial to us and indeed sometimes boring. They are usually anything but trivial. Behind fundamental changes in the language of prayer and praise hide substantial theological issues and within such changes lie prophecies of our life together and our way in the world.

Notes

1. *Worship*, Vol. 53, p.3f; *The Hymn*, Vol. 31, p.27f.
2. *Worship*, Vol. 53, p.7ff; *The Hymn*, Vol. 31, p.30ff; Hustad, Donald P., *Jubilate* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Hope Publishing Co., 1981) p.271ff.
3. Duck, Ruth C. and Bausch, Michael, *Everflowing Streams* (N.Y.: The Pilgrim Press, 1981).
4. Report 2188—A, Survey on a Proposed United Methodist Contemporary Songbook, submitted September 29, 1977 by Central Research, The United Methodist Publishing House, pp. 4-10.
5. "Perspectives on the Family from the Standpoint of Faith Development," *Perkins Journal*, Vol. 33, pp.2.
6. *Toys and Reasons* (N.Y.: W.W. Norton and Co., 1977), pp. 89.
7. Vol. 32, p. 97.
8. *Worship*, Vol. 53, p.9; *The Hymn*, Vol. 31, p.32.

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Sexism in Hymn Language*

Brian Wren



Brian Wren is a minister of the United Reformed (formerly Congregational) Church in England and Wales who lives in Oxford. His hymn texts were recently published with many tunes by Peter Cutts in a collection entitled *Faith Looking Forward (Hope)* which was introduced at the HSA's National Convocation.

I can already hear the angry protests and dismissive snorts: "Too trivial to discuss," "a passing fad," "women's lib fanatics," etc. etc. Yet if something is a serious matter, even as yet for a minority of Christians, can love dismiss it as "trivial," and reason refuse to debate? I predict that it will not remain a minority interest, even in conservative Britain. So please join with me, and explore two issues.

(I) Man, men, brethren and sons . . .

When "mann" (or variant spellings) was first used in English, it meant a human person of either gender. "His mother was a Christian named Elen, a very full-of-faith man, and extremely pious," said Aelfric in about AD 1000. Today, however, words like "man," "men," and "mankind" increasingly suggest "maleness," even though some grammarians still cling to the older convention that they are "generic." A 1973 study showed that a majority of primary school children interpreted "man" in sentences like "around the world man is happy" to mean male people rather than female. Other research yields similar results. To test this, consider the following sentences:

- i. Man is a tool-using animal (school textbook)
- ii. Man's vital interests are life, food, access to females . . . (Erich Fromm)
- iii. Man is the only primate that commits rape (quote, source unstated)
- iv. Man, being a mammal, breast-feeds his young
- v. As long as man is on earth, he's likely to cause problems. But the men at General Electric will keep trying to find answers. (advertisement).

The meaning of "man" and "men" in the above is by no means clear and unambiguous. In (i) it is intended to mean "the human species, female and male," but it is questionable whether to most children it calls up mental pictures of *women* as immediately or assuredly as pictures of *men*. In (ii), Fromm claims to be making a generic statement about humans, but is actually thinking only about the male half of the species. For he slips from the supposedly generic "man" (=females and males) to the male "man" who desires "access to females." In (iii) a statement purporting to be about the *whole* species in comparison with other primates, can only refer to the half of the species which inflicts sexual humiliation on the other half: it is not a generalized

*(This article is reprinted from the July 1983 issue of *News of Hymnody* with permission.)

"Man" but specifically male *men* who are in mind. In these two examples, the word "man" is at best confusing and at worst, used as a smokescreen for doublethink: the response if challenged is likely to be "of course by 'man' I include 'woman,'" but analysis shows that women are *excluded* from discussion. The older generic meaning, which was quite clear to Aelfric, no longer "works." To use unambiguous generic terms like "human," "humanity," "person(s)," "people," etc. is essential for clear thought. In example (iv), a made-up sentence suggests, again, that to use "man" generically now seems rather contrived—is it the word that would *naturally* come to your lips when talking generically about this female function? Example (v) goes with a photograph of *male* executives. Do you, on reading it, immediately see in your mind's eye the myriads of *women* working at General Electric? I suggest that the older generic meaning of "man" and "men" has had its day, and that new expressions need to be found. As the previous paragraph suggests, generic words are available, if we care to use them.

Thus, I conclude that no new hymns should use "man" and "men" generically, and that existing hymns worth retaining should be revised. This is far more than a matter of substituting single words. It is not a valid objection, as some suppose, to pounce gleefully on the many examples where single-word substitutions sound absurd, or do not scan. "You can't sing, 'Good Christian persons rejoice'." Of course not! And "Good Christian folk" is too quaint. But "Good Christians all . . .?" Or "Good Christians now . . .?" The latter seems to me quite acceptable. I have revised my own hymns accor-

dingly. For example, the last stanza of "Christ Is Alive" changes from:

Christ is alive! Ascendant Lord,
he rules the world his Father made,
till in the end, his love adored
shall be to every man displayed

to:

Christ is alive! His Spirit burns
through this, and every future age,
till all creation lives and learns
his joy, his justice, love and praise!

The rethink is, I think, more *dynamic*, pointing to the Spirit's action rather than static and archaic ideas of "kingly rule." Revision is possible, and does not need to be wooden or absurd.

Brothers and Sons: Similar considerations apply to words like "brethren" and "sons," used in a generic sense. It is not a sound argument to say that this merely reflects New Testament language. To begin with, the "male" orientation has sometimes been reinforced in translation. In John 1:12 and I John 3:1 the Authorized Version has "sons of God" where the Greek has a common gender pronoun meaning "children." Similarly, in I Tim. 3:1 and I Tim. 3:5 the KJV has "any man" where the Greek refers to "any one," gender unspecified. In rejecting the male bias of "sons of God" meaning "daughters and sons" and "brethren" for "brothers and sisters," we are not abandoning biblical authority, but rather following through the implications of crucial passages like Galatians 3:28 and seeking the equality of brothers and sisters together in Christ. In mid-1950s, the phrase "Fathers and brethren," as a form of address to Congregational Church Assemblies of women and men, gradually went out of use, despite the affection given to it by custom and tradition, because it no longer fitted the way that

speakers and audience perceived their equality in Christ. Our hymnody should follow suit.

I should perhaps make my own assumptions clear. As a white, male, middle-class, English Christian, I have come to see that my society is deeply *male-dominated*. The questioning of sexism in language is not a frill, an "extra," or a surface issue. It reflects deeper stirrings, questioning social inequalities. Such questioning ought to find a particularly keen interest among Christians, whose Lord approached women in a radically different, dignity-perceiving, way from social conventions of his time, and who founded a church based on the unity and equality of free and slave, Jew and Gentile, female and male.

(II) Singing about God

God's being and character cannot be adequately described in language. All the words we use to describe, or picture, or *name*, the Godhead are inadequate. Some are less inadequate than others. Tradition has recognized that metaphors from human personality and relationships are the least misleading, and can point to the deepest truths about God's love. But tradition also warns us that the very best of our metaphors are no more than that—analogies, picture language, mental and poetic images.

Poetic images are just as likely to provoke idol worship as graven ones. To call God "Father" is a poetic image, a metaphor, pointing to truths about God and humanity which we recognize and wish to maintain. But the "Father" image does not have a single unambiguous meaning. It is in the nature of poetic images to be open to many possible interpretations. At different times this particular image, central in Christian tradition, has had

- different connotations, for example,
- an intimate relationship of parent and child.* Jesus' use of the Aramaic word "Abba" has been said to suggest this kind of awareness.
 - the relationship of originator and originated.* Early trinitarian theology thought more in terms of "paternity," the identity of being, or continuity of being, between "Father" and "Son," than the warmth of a personal relationship.
 - authority:* the Victorian or Roman paterfamilias, stern, demanding, judging, often formal and remote, yet beneath it all loving and gracious, whom one offends, obeys, and admires, and who dispenses pardon.
 - power:* creative and redemptive might (often used in association with other metaphors like Judge, King, Lord).

All these nuances have elements of truth, and have been differently "vivid" to Christians at different times. But, like all images, they are NOT GOD. Poetic images mislead us if we bow down and worship them, and cling to the images and their meaning for us, instead of worshipping the ineffable love to which they point. They distort or cramp our worship if we are blind to their provisional nature, and to their limitation.

One limitation of our traditional images, and the church's use of them is their exclusive maleness. It is not their maleness as such (I have no wish to perceive God as neuter, or stop knowing God as my father), but the tacit (and sometimes explicit) assumption that God is somehow more correctly, more fully, more properly, seen as *a male being* than as *the source of maleness-and-femaleness* who can be known and "imaged" as

either.

The heavy masculinity of our images of God is easily demonstrated. Take one major hymnbook, the 1933 Methodist one (soon to be replaced by a Methodist-and-Ecumenical book). Its opening sections, Nos. 1-81 (Adoration and Worship; God) show God overwhelmingly imagined in male and masculine terms. God is Father (in trinitarian and non-trinitarian contexts) 25 times, King (29) and Lord (97—omitting references to Christ, who is obviously “Lord” and male). God is designated by the male pronouns (he, him, his), which often bespatter a descriptive hymn (hymns directly addressing the deity avoid this problem). The male pronouns occur some 287 times in 4 verses, and he is father-like in his authority (he chides, but is slow to do so) and forgiveness. There are hints of tenderness (in his hands he gently bears us) but this does not much reduce the maleness of the whole. If the hymn stood by itself, as one of the many varied ways of picturing God, it would be unproblematic. My point is that the maleness of God in our hymnody (and other liturgical language) is *overwhelming*.

By contrast, varieties of non-sex-based terms *are* available to hymn-writers, and are used in this section. One finds Creator (5 times), Friend (4), Shepherd (3), Sun and Saviour (twice each), and Eternal, Defender, Great, First, Last, High, Holy, Infinite, Love, One, Original, Rock, Maker, Shield, Renewer, Redeemer, and Primeval Beauty. Many occur as part of a string of titles in the same hymn, and so do not modify the overall picture. Feminine imagery is rare. God is compared to a human mother and father (no. 73 st. 6)¹, and we are enfolded in God’s encircling arms (57, st. 4).² It is by God that new things are brought

to birth (55, st. 1)³, and we can ask that God will ‘with love embrace and cover me’ (42, st. 2).⁴ But such hidden coins are found only with much searching.

But why search for them? Why question the tradition? What does it mean for us that the Bible does overwhelmingly “image” God in male terms? I can only touch briefly on profound issues which need harder and deeper thought. Firstly, while most biblical imagery *assumes* maleness as the “obvious” way of picturing God, I am not sure that there is anywhere an assertion that male imagery is “right” and female imagery “wrong.” If this could be shown, we should then have to ask whether the preference or prohibition was intended normatively, for all time, or historically—perhaps in controversy with gods and goddesses of earth and air and water, who did not transcend nature.

Secondly, though our Bible comes from a patriarchal society, biblical writers and speakers do picture God in female terms, albeit far less frequently than in male. God is pictured as giving birth, and being like a woman in labor (Deut. 32:18, Isa. 42:14), as a woman who cannot forget her child (Is. 49:15), and as a mothering God who teaches toddlers Israel to walk, feeds him, and takes him in her arms (Hos. 11:1-11).

Thirdly, I think it can be shown that where God’s eternal nature is thought about, the Bible is clear that God is beyond male and female: Spirit, Light, Fire, who cannot be seen, whose very name becomes too holy to utter, and who makes women and men collectively in the divine image (Gen. 1). Now if God is the *source* of human maleness and femaleness, if God created the human species collectively in the divine

image, it follows that we shall know some aspects of that creative and redemptive love more fully if we develop "feminine" imagery and female metaphors, as biblical precedents allow. The one who made female and male equal partners in Christ can be addressed as: mother, sister, friend, lover as well as brother, father, etc.

But what of the Trinity? The maleness of Jesus seems to me part of the inevitable particularity of incarnation. "If God was to be incarnate, he had to be male or female, just as he had to be of a particular race and raised in a particular culture. Only because Christ was constrained by such circumstances do we recognize that he shared in our human nature" (A. J. Milbank, letter to *The Guardian*, Sept. 1982). Jesus' maleness, and Hebrew thinking about the king as God's son, made a Father and Son metaphor for the first two persons of the Trinity inevitable, and the Spirit is usually masculinized as "he/him" in English hymnody, reinforcing a triangularity of maleness.

Yet the male imagery of traditional trinitarian theology is becoming increasingly problematic, however hard we try to explain it away. Some women definitely feel excluded by it. One (by no means a "hardline feminist," whatever that is) wrote to me as follows, about traditional trinitarian language: "Might I say, being a mother myself, that a perfect family consists of a father and mother who are of equal value. By making God's family not only a one-parent one but an all-male one at that, we restrict our understanding of God by omitting the very necessary female qualities." Theology which dismisses this by looking *back* at the tradition, rather than *forward and sideways* to contemporary experience entirely

misses the point.

One function of trinitarian theology is to express and guard the truth that God is not a Oneness of uniformity, self-absorption, or isolation. In our human experience we know an incredible variety of relationships: female-male, father-son, sister-sister, sister-brother, colleague-fellow worker, team and group relationships, community, communion, grandparent-grandchild, and others too numerous to list. If we, with all our multifaceted relationships, are made in God's image and likeness, *it follows that the creative Godhead is, contains, and moves in, an incredible richness and reciprocity, in which all our varieties of relationship find their source.* There is more to the trinitarian being of God than the "one-parent family" images of "Father" and "Son," and the limited abstraction of *three-foldness* in oneness, can say. The central purpose of trinitarian theology has been to make clear that the diversity or relationships in the Godhead, which Christians discover in Jesus the Logos-made-flesh, and in the energy of the Spirit, are not a case of "many gods," but of a transcendent godhead who is both ONE and COMMUNITY. Provided we hold on to that insight, we can safely and with great benefit, develop new images of God to compensate for the limitations of "maleness" and "threeness" in tradition. We can also escape from the limitations which our language imposes on us by cutting down the "hes" and "hims," finding alternatives in hymnal revision, speaking directly to God rather than descriptively about God and—perhaps, perhaps!—daring to think of God sometimes as a "her" and a "she."

I have reached the limit of exploration. Perhaps only in prayer and song can we go further, and test what

"works" in worship, and feels right.
Here, as space allows, are a few
markers of my own:

Dear Sister God, you held me at my birth.
You sang my name, were glad to see my face.
You are my sky, my shining sun,
and in your love there's always room
to be, and grow, yet find a home,
a settled place.

(st. 1 of 4 stanza hymn, 1980)
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When minds and bodies meet as one
and find their true affinity,
we join the dance in God begun
and move within the Trinity,
for all the good that's seen and done
in every kind of unity,
begins with God, forever One,
whose nature is Community.

At one in Christ, we break and bless
the bread of new society,
and celebrate togetherness
from infinite variety,
then eat and drink what love has won
and seize the opportunity
to dance with God, forever One,
whose nature is Community.

(Trinity Carol, 1981, first and last stanzas)
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Brian Wren

Notes

1. My God, How Wonderful Thou Art
2. In All My Vast Concerns With Thee

3. Lord God, By Whom All Change Is Brought
4. O God, Thou Bottomless Abyss!

Have you purchased your copy of *Index to the Hymn, 1949-1981*, compiled by Deborah Loftis? This valuable index unlocks the treasures of more than 30 years of fascinating material published in *The Hymn*. To purchase your copy, send \$6.00 to the Hymn Society of America, Wittenberg University, Springfield, OH 45501.

Language as Life-Bearing

Constance F. Parvey



Constance F. Parvey is a minister of the Lutheran Church in America on the faculty of the Vancouver School of Theology. She is former director of the WCC, Faith and Order program on The Community of Women and Men in the Church Study. She is editor of *Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective* (WCC) and author

of *The Community of Women and Men in the Church* (Fortress).

The Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches is just over. The circus tent, erected for the worship, has been taken down. What remains lives in the traces of the memories of those 1000s of people who came regularly to the worship; people who voluntarily stretched their day in order to be present in praise with peoples from many cultures, praying and singing in many languages, accompanied by musicians and musical instruments from Indonesia, Japan, Argentina, many places in Africa, the islands of the Pacific and the Caribbean. It is out of this context that I begin these reflections on inclusive language.

I. Inclusive Language is a Discipline.

Inclusive language is not only an issue of language based on androcentric models, meaning language models such as "man" and "mankind" which "include women," or theological symbol words such as "fatherhood" or "he." The issues of inclusive language points to something very deep in the psyche (used here to include both dimensions of the psychological and the spiritual/theological). The use of inclusive language is a mental/spiritual discipline. It is part of a training to think inclusively in all areas of one's life.

Inclusive language is a discipline of reflecting about God more horizontally than vertically. It involves thinking across the heavy lines of class, race, sex and age. Heavy lines that often contain our thinking in mental pyramids and from which we find it difficult to break away. I do not mean by these words to diminish the importance of inclusive language for women and men. What I am saying is that the language appropriate for women/men today opens up our entire thinking to a new discipline of thought. Part of the practice of this discipline is always to think and look for who is left out, what persons or groups are overlooked, silent, absent, "invisible," or given second thought priority, e.g. "O yes, and . . . X. must be included, too."

Before we go further, it must be asked, "What is language anyway?" One is keenly aware in an international setting of the fundamental symbolic character of language. Language—words, phrases, paragraphs—conveys meaning. It is astounding how much a person can understand in a language that he/she does not even know if really engaged in a dialogue, if one is really listening and paying attention to the sounds and the emphases. These musical elements of language do not come out so

clearly in the written word, but are essential for the artist—musician, composer, poet, singer. Language, as such, is an instrument of communion. The individual words have no reality in themselves. They come in many forms; language emerges out of culture with many different rhythms, patterns, accents. Language alone is not reality, but language has the power to signify, point to, describe how reality is experienced. Language is an instrument of human communication and a form of contact for us with the Source of our Creation, Life, and Hope. Lewis Carroll, author of *Alice in Wonderland*, has said about our use of words that: We say what we mean and we mean what we say. In other words, we chose words, consciously and unconsciously. Sometimes we unconsciously say what we really mean, though if we had been more aware, we might have held back. We are deliberate about words; they do not fall out of our mouths by accident. Part of becoming more conscious of ourselves *vis-a-vis* others is to become more aware not only of what we have to say, but, perhaps more important, more aware of how our words will be received. Because words are symbols of communication, it is not only our finely tuned phrases that are important, but also how they will be interpreted. Language is dynamic. It lives in the interaction between those actors who shape the dialogue. As we exclude people with our movements—the turning away of our eyes, the actions of our bodies, so we exclude, or diminish, or render people invisible with our words.

II. Care About the Words We Chose.

In the shaping of our hymnody and our theology of spirituality why should we be so concerned with

issues of inclusive language? Is this not a regional rather than a universal issue, confined to the North American continent? It is true that the sensitivity to male centered language began in the English speaking areas of North America. However, the use of male umbrella words that include women under their protection, or shadow, without naming them is found also in other languages. About five years ago some groups began to work on this topic within the German, Scandinavian and French languages. Christian women in both East and West Germany began exploring language issues, and women in Belgium and France began working ecumenically (Roman Catholic and Protestant) on inclusive language liturgies for their gatherings of worship. For cultures of the Southern hemisphere, especially Asia, Africa and the Pacific, the new consciousness of inclusive language does allow some cultures to reclaim from their premissionary past some of the concepts of their indigenous languages regarding people and references to Deity. Some of the language that was lost with the spread of Christianity is now being reconsidered for its appropriateness regarding relationships in family, community and covenant with God. As Christianity spread, it brought with it Western culture. The force of this combination of faith and culture overshadowed and subordinated local cultures and local languages. But as the Christian faith has become more secure and rooted in the Southern hemisphere, it also is engaged in a process of recovering local languages and cultural forms that are often more inclusive and community centered than have been the Western patriarchal and hierarchical concepts that they have adopted

and adapted with receiving Christian faith. So, the issue of inclusive language is not just a North American issue; further, and perhaps more important, it opens up our own languages, and the concepts hidden behind them, to analysis and challenge when set in juxtaposition with language forms that arise out of other rich, ancient, non-individualistic centered cultures.

When we think about inclusive language, it is clear that we must probe even deeper. We must ask yet another question: What is theological language itself? What is the language of worship? Inclusive language is not just a question of slotting in a few changed words here and there, a kind of religious anagram. Certainly that can and needs to be done where appropriate, but that is not the end; it is only the beginning of this adventure. Theological language is the language of addressing and hearing God. It is language that probes the depths of the mystery of life—of where we have come from, go and find unique meaning for our existence. Without holding on to the mystery behind theological language, there can be a tendency to make God into an object: "god." God is always Yahweh (I Am Who I Am). Only God defines God's self. God is hidden, yet revealed. God, expressed in the language of the Holy Trinity is a way that the Church has found to speak of the continual action of God—in One, yet creating, redeeming, sustaining. God is always more than we can put into words. God is Word. God always transcends the words we use. The history of theology is the history of the limits of language, even of theological language and the language of prayer. Essential to our understanding of the Trinity is that at its core is a fundamental understand-

ing of God as relational. God appears not only as the Author of Life/Source of Life; God is revealed through Messianic life in our midst, with Christ and through the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is not about sexual differences. It is about the mystery of Persons. It is a prismatic way that the Church has found for people of faith to speak about God. The real event of the suffering, crucified Jesus/Risen Christ created an astonishingly inclusive community. The book of Acts, chapter two, tells us that people were baffled by it. In the Galatian church, the fighting between Jewish and Gentile Christians was only reconciled by the fact that both—along with rich and poor, women and men—were baptized into the one Body of Christ. Their differences no longer matter; they have a new identity in Christ. They still remain Jews and Gentiles, but the inclusivity of the Church in its very nature made them something more. Inclusive language is about both our identity as women and men and our identity as one in the Body. There is a tension between who we are and what we are called by God to become. The recognition of differences is foundational to the call to become inclusive in the Church.

This recognition of differences is as true for the identity of human beings as it is for the languages that we use. Just as cultures are varied, so are languages. Some languages have inclusive concepts that others lack. For examples, in German there is the word "Mensch" which means person, male or female. The English language has a built-in problem in that there is no common word, one must always say women *and* men. Some languages have, in one word, the concept of femaleperson, maleperson. The root, person, points to their commonality; the designation

male and female points to their biological differences. In English, lacking a common base word, there is a gap set up between men *and* women within the pattern of the language itself. Women and men are known and designated by their differences; linguistically they appear to share no common root. In the English language this is extended further; our anthropology tends to begin with the base of the individual rather than the community.

Now to the language of God. Some languages have many names for God. I am told that in the Orthodox liturgy alone there are about 30 names for God. We have many names for God in English—especially in the ancient Collects, in the language of the mystics, and in the theological tradition. In the history of the Church, we tend to address God in relation to God's qualities—Love, Light, Mercy, All Mighty, Reconcile, Judge, Most High, Lord, etc. However, the symbol most often used is Father. The question arises, what is *not*-right about this title for God. Perhaps the greatest danger is that by narrowing our symbol to father, there is the danger of making God into an object. We border, if not fault in making God into an image, coming close to disobeying the second commandment, making graven images with graven words. My suspicion is raised about this when I see how emotionally attached some of us in the church are to the use of the word Father, as *the* definitive word for God. Key arguments are marshalled for its use, such as the fact that Jesus referred to God as Father, a unique term for God in the new Israel, or the use of the term Father in the great petition to go out and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, or the use of

these three terms in the discussion of the nature of the three-fold Trinity. There is without question an enormous tradition that has been built up around this designation for the first Person of the Trinity. One could hardly argue that it should be totally abandoned. Rather, one can argue that our language for Theos must be expanded, that it, too is historically conditioned, captive and limiting; it is no longer sufficient, without renewed interpretation for witnessing to the God who is the God of all reality, in its deepest depths, apparent contradictions and in the midst of its sharpest human dilemmas. Theological language is not wooden and constructed; it is the servant to express the unexpressable. As such it comes closer to poetry. When we enter into a hymn or a prayer, or a fine theological treatise, we enter into its mood and inspiration. It carries us on its words. They are meant to be, not our roadblocks to God, but our stepping stones to a faith that is both given and revealed.

III. Some Historical Perspective.

Finally, how is it that we have now arrived at this point of sensitivity about language? This is a big question, deserving much more reflection. However, one dimension of an answer lies in the nature of theological language itself. Born out of Western culture, its roots are patriarchial, hierarchial, white. Like ancient Rome, its language is male-centered and structured like a pyramid of power. The traditions from which our theology come are out of this Western androcentric cultural tradition. It is the male who is the primary image of God and it is the female who is the reflected image. One can see this not only in Augustine and Aquinas, but also in the Reformers. It

seemed natural to them. In the medieval feudal world, this was not yet open to question. Behind this androcentrism lies a pyramid structure in the ordering of reality, called by some an ontological structure. It looks something like this:

God as Father

Man (primary image)

Woman

Children

Non-European peoples of
darker races

Plants

Earth

A study of 15th and 16th century paintings shows this very clearly. In terms of anthropology, man is classically—in caricature—associated upward, to the divine; he is the center of intellect. Women is closer to the earth; hers is the world of intuition. In this ordering, it is intellect (male) that controls intuition (female), hence man is dominant. Biblical passages such as I Corinthians II, I Timothy 2 and Ephesians 5 have been used to substantiate the divine authority of this ordering.

Whatever we might say about the late 20th century journeys into outer space and landings on the moon, one thing is clear. We no longer can believe, experientially, that our relationship with God is a pyramid structure. We know that we live in God's cosmos, on a planet that rotates around the sun in an intricate and vast network of relationships. Our awareness is dramatically changed. God is not from the top down, or the bottom up, but dynamic presence—like a whirlwind, a *ruah*, a breath of life. We know, consciously, that our medieval concepts of God do not fit. We are becoming more aware that this male shaped, static conceptual structure of picturing reality does not conform with our new awareness and

that words such as headship need to be re-understood, closer to their original meaning as source, origin of life. There is also more consciousness that this pyramid structure is antithetical to what we call the equality and dignity of human persons. Equality is one of those modern words that has not yet gained a place in the theological vocabulary. But it is a word born out of and informed by a Christian conscience. The people who have stood behind this word and struggled for it have been—in the past—Christian people, people imbued with Christian values, also often lay people whose Christian conscience centered on problems in society rather than in the Church itself. From people in the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment period, this term has permeated political life, both in democratic and socialist countries. It is an ideal, however unrealized, in both political frameworks, but in the theological tradition of the churches, it is not yet a goal. In church communities, equality is a principle, but for many voices in the ecumenical movement it is a principle to be realized only in the end times. It is seen more as the work of God, rather than as part of the struggle of God's people to overcome our fallenness and be reconciled with God, in God's image.

IV. The Way Forward

If women and men of all classes and races together are made in God's image, then our theology and worship must be in keeping with this Divine/Human potential of our personhood. Inclusive language requires a discipline. It requires silence before God—a listening for the voices, a listening for the human ways the Holy Spirit breathes, bears and delivers to us inclusive life in the fullness of community. Language can be life-bearing.

The Springfield National Convocation

For the first time, the Hymn Society of America joined forces with a kindred organization, Experience '83, to sponsor a National Convocation. This combined event involved a considerable amount of effort on the part of the joint conference coordinator, C. W. Locke, and HSA executive director W. Thomas Smith. Instead of our usual Sunday evening plus two days, the convocation was expanded to five days, from Sunday evening through Friday evening. And instead of having the program geared almost entirely to hymnody, the program was enriched with numerous other opportunities, such as workshops related to handbell ringing (David Davidson), liturgical dance (Loralie McCoy), service playing for organists (Sue Wallace and Trudy Faber), and sessions reading new music from several publishers. Another feature that enriched this convocation was the separate daily programs for children and youth included choirs for these age groups.

With 1983 being the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth and our meeting at Wittenberg University, the Lutheran institution which has provided office space for the HSA since 1976, it was especially appropriate that we begin on Sunday evening with Carl Schalk's address on Luther and the Festival of Luther's Hymns led by Donald A. Busarow and the choir of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Huber Heights, Ohio. This was followed by a contrasting Monday evening program on Hymns of the Evangelistic Tradition, introduced by Donald P. Hustad and led by a

choir formed from Churches of God of the Springfield area directed by Frank K. Ponce and accompanied at the piano by Ronald Boud. This latter presentation was a panorama of witness song from 19th and 20th century America, ranging from Sunday School hymnody and hymns of Sankey's generation to songs of living composers such as John W. Peterson, William J. Gaither, and Andrae Crouch. Coupled with the singing, which included congregational participation, was a slide presentation of individuals and scenes depicting the cultural contexts of this tradition.

Undoubtedly the two individuals who made the most memorable impact on this five-day event were our special guests from England, hymn text writer Brian Wren and hymn tune composer Peter Cutts. The conference was particularly indebted to Hope Publishing Company for making their visit possible and for providing copies of the new collection of texts and tunes of Wren and Cutts, entitled *Faith Looking Forward*. We probably set the world's record for the most hymns of Cutts and Wren to be sung within five days! In their daily classes they provided us with fresh insights into their hymns and furnished guidance to writers of texts and tunes. Brian Wren particularly stimulated our thinking about the language of hymnody and of worship, as in his thoughts about God as Father and Mother. Note, for example, his Prayers to God as Father and Mother used in the Thursday morning worship.

God our Mother, you give birth to



Participants walking from Wittenberg's Weaver Chapel.



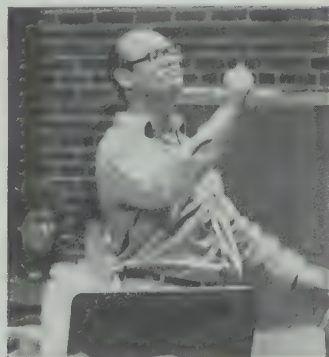
Congregational singing led by area Churches of God Choir.



Printer Fred Otto presents author J. Vincent Higginson a copy of his new *History of American Catholic Hymnals*.



Brian Wren speaks in chapel.



Peter Cutts conducts a vigorous upbeat.



Anastasia van Burkalow receives HSA Fellow certificate from President John H. Giesler.



James R. Sydnor reads his HSA Fellow certificate while President-Elect Austin C. Lovelace looks on.



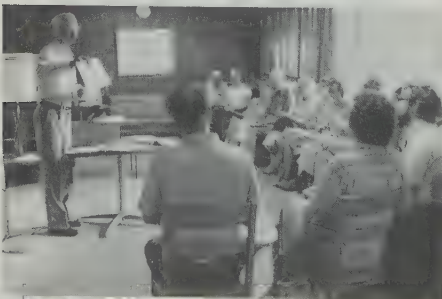
Donald P. Hustad presents commentary on Hymns in the Evangelistic Tradition.



Ronald Nelson directs a class of boys and girls.



James R. Sydnor teaching under a campus shade tree.



Louis Voight shows early German-American hymnals and tunebooks from Wittenberg's library.



Robert Batastini conducts a Taizé music workshop.

all life, and love us to the uttermost. Your love surrounds us and feeds us. Within your love we find our home, our joy, our freedom. You open the world to us, and give us room to change and grow. As you love us, so you love all your children. Help us, dear Mother God, to catch something of your love: your delight in others' uniqueness, your care for their well-being, your grief at their suffering, your patience and forgiveness, your energy and hope. We thank you, we praise you, we love you: Through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Holy and Living God, Father of life and light, weaving space and time, our only source of everything that is, set us free from all false gods to worship you alone. Help us to unmask the powers and systems of this world, which fascinate us with their glory. Help us to renounce: security based on money, comfort based on injustice, and success measured by power or recognition. Set our minds on your kingdom of love and justice before everything else, so that we may know you as our God and Savior, our certain Hope and our eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

This week's worship included various liturgies and innovative use of the arts. Following each evening session was a Taize Compline led by Robert Batastini. Music and visual arts through color slides developed by Sue Wallace were combined to present "The Passion of Christ." At the closing Eucharist several hymn tunes of Ralph Vaughan Williams were sung.

Recently published and forthcoming new hymnals were introduced in several New Hymnal Showcases: *The Hymnal 1982* (Episcopal) introduced

by Ray Glover, *Hymns of the Saints* (RLDS) by Roger Revell, *Lutheran Worship* (Missouri Synod) by Edward Klammer, *Rejoice in the Lord* (Reformed, edited by Erik Routley) by Roger Reitberg, and the *Book of Worship* (Swedishborgian—the Church of the New Jerusalem) by Barbara McKay.

The Annual Meeting of the Hymn Society of America brought recognition to four long-time members for their outstanding achievements. Leonard Ellinwood was recognized for years of labor on the *Dictionary of American Hymnology*, a monumental project which is in part now available from University Music Editions on microfiche and microfilm. Vincent Higginson, a past president of the HSA, was presented the first copy of his second volume on American Catholic hymnody, *The History of American Catholic Hymnals* (both volumes are available from the HSA). Two persons were awarded HSA Fellow Certificates: Anastasia Van Burkalow, hymnologist, hymn writer, and historian of the Hymn Society; and James R. Sydnor, retired seminary professor and author of four books in hymnology (including the recently released *Hymns: A Congregational Study*).

Other workshops and features of this year's expanded National Convocation are too numerous to be covered here. The more than 400 participants responded with genuine enthusiasm to the week's opportunities. Plans are already being made for next year's National Convocation to be held in the Chicago area, July 22-24. Mark your calendar now and begin making plans to attend.

A Reflection on Morning and Night Prayers at Experience 83/HSA Convocation

Richard J. Wojcik

(Richard J. Wojcik, a Roman Catholic priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago, teaches music and liturgy at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Muldheim, Illinois.)

Morning Glory

Each day of the convocation activities began very vividly. Probably the most influential experiences of the entire week were the carefully crafted morning services. Brian Wren's avowed purpose was to help everyone "to hear afresh" as he put it. That he did. Forty-five minutes in a non-air conditioned church at 8:00 A.M. in Ohio, July, "steam room" weather was reason enough for excuse from attendance. Very few if any missed. What was happening was really "not of this world" though it was in and about this world.

Just notice, or recall, the thematic progression from Monday through Friday:

1. "Worship Open to Question": do our hearts worship?

Images: spaceship earth/Church and graveyards.

2. "Worship Among The Ruins": how do you worship in post-Christian times?

Images: rugged, make-shift crosses of old wood identifying modern atrocities.

3. "Worship in a World Church": reuniting the family of earth in loving faith;

Images: facing a processional cross stationed in the center of the congregation as the crossroads of earth.

4. "Worship For a Freed People":

service without submission to the world;

Images: kneeling at another's feet.

5. "Worship in Hope": "once more into the breach";

Images: ladders, a mobile of butterflies, mime-ing, handbells, children "singing" a hymn, the congregation interjecting hymns into a sermon.

"To hear afresh" meant to refine our ability to listen to what we pray and recognize the courageous words we place on our lips. The thrust was that the faith which comes by hearing, when truly heard as we pray its words generates the will to be lived. That will to live was modeled for us in music, mime, visuals, etc., and embodied in the fervor and genuinity of the preacher, Brian Wren.

The final service, a mini-festival, drawing on the resources for worship studied all week came dangerously close to being a super-abundant showcase of talents. But that largesse could be tolerated in the perspective of being a summation kind of festival.

The other mornings had an almost primitive simplicity to them. The Lord's prayer in every service retained its pristine clarity and directness and kept the artistry of the services in a compelling focus of divine praise and human service. Each day reinforced a baptismal resolve not to

accept the world as it has become but to renew it and re-orient it to its source and destiny in God.

Congregational involvement was natural and non-threatening. People were not afraid to think revolutionary thoughts and say strong, revolutionary things about their will to seek world peace and local justice. Brian Wren's presiding style and the unpretentious performance of the rituals made such words feel spontaneous, made such dreams realistic, made such hopes authentic for people with honest faith.

Needless to say, the months of prayerful thought, planning and developing resources produced an abundance of ideas, feelings and resolves as could be expected when grace is allowed free rein. The years of service and praise these prayers will inspire will certainly validate their worth.

The Night Belonged to God

The night prayer at the end of each day (not Friday) revealed the mystery and, yes, the magic the Taizé style of music brings to prayer. The spare, "orientalish" style was just right where it belonged in this week-long

experience. The deceptively simple and uncomplicated ecumenical format of night prayer based on the Liturgy of the Hours generated and sustained a profound personal depth of intimacy with God. One after another participants remarked how their exhaustion from work and weather was transformed into a refreshment, a quiet renovation, a true sense of accomplishment in having worked all day at how better to know and love God. And—did you ever go to sleep humming a prayer? The Taizé patterns made that natural and blessed.

Einstein is supposed to have said: "Make things as simple as possible, but no simpler." Every artist knows what that means. The simplicity of these daily services demonstrated that there is a great art even to non-Eucharistic forms of prayer. When diligent planning, crafts and skills are wedded to generous devotion and humility, simplicity is born, a sure sign of God's presence and spiritual nourishment. I'm sure that the participants will offer years of thanks for all of God's artists who revealed the Supreme Artist to us in very moving and holy experiences.

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For a Brochure write to:

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In the Garden

(An interpretation)

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that He gave to me,
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him
Though the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling.

Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

C. Austin Miles (1868-1946)

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A number of years ago "In the Garden" was reported to be one of America's favorite hymns, second only to "The Old Rugged Cross." At the same time, it received a barrage of criticism from individuals who feared that it did not contribute to maturity in hymnic worship. "At best, it is vague and sentimental, with its talk of a garden with birds and dewy roses," they said; "at worst, it is erotic and egocentric." The truth is that, while the song may not often be sung with understanding, C. Austin Miles' words are an imaginative, perceptive and accurate rendering of one of the

most beautiful narratives in the New Testament. The author gives the clue to their meaning in his own account of the hymn's origin.

One day in March, 1912 . . . I drew my Bible toward me; it opened at my favorite chapter, John 20 . . . That meeting of Jesus and Mary Magdalene had lost none of its power to charm. As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life, when she knelt before her Lord, and cried, "Rabboni!" . . . Under the inspiration of this vision I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed the poem exactly as it

has since appeared.

(From *Forty Gospel Hymn Stories*,
George Sanville)

Miles' explanation makes it clear that he was writing about events which took place on Easter morning in the garden which held Jesus' tomb. The "he" and "me" of the song are the risen Christ and Mary of Magdala—the woman from whom Jesus exorcized seven demons, and who is traditionally identified as a prostitute who was reclaimed, forgiven and purified. Furthermore, all the essentials of the story are found in the hymn's lyrics. It is probably true that this hymn is so personal an expression of the composer that it should not be sung in corporate worship without an explanation of its background.

"I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses." "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark" (John 20:1). If there were roses in the garden, they were no doubt covered with morning dew.

"And the voice I hear falling on my ear the Son of God discloses." Following the poignant narrative of the dialog in which Mary mistook Jesus for the gardener (so there had to be roses!), we read: "Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabboni!' (which means Teacher)." This has been called the greatest recognition scene in all literature. Mary, who had sinned so much and been forgiven and healed—Mary, who loved Christ so much—was the first to see him after his resurrection.

C. Austin Miles understood that the brief gospel story does not contain the whole of Jesus' and Mary's conversation. No doubt they recalled in

detail the dramatic events of the preceding week. It is probable that, in discussing his coming ascension, Jesus assured Mary of his continuing presence and help in her new life of commitment and wholeness. *"And he walks with me and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own."*

In concluding the account, the King James Bible has this curious sentence (v. 17): "Jesus saith unto her, 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father'; we must believe that the songwriter did not miss its true meaning. The conversion of the sinner-saint and her Lord was apparently prolonged at Mary's insistence. (*"I'd stay in the garden with him though the night around me be falling"*—a statement of desire rather than of fact.) Newer scripture versions suggest that Jesus was chiding Mary (*"he bids me go through the voice of woe"*), and that we may paraphrase the passage: "Quit hanging on to me; I must ascend to my Father. But go and tell my disciples . . ." So Mary became the first to tell the good news!

And what of the closing words: *"And the joy we share as we tarry there none other has ever known"*? Mary's joy was unique; she was first to know that Christ had risen and would ever live with us.

It may be presumption for us to evaluate Christ's joy at that moment, but even more so to doubt it. In Gethsemane he prayed "Let this cup pass." On Calvary, he proclaimed "It is finished." In the garden he was united again with us whom he loves. "Mary!" "Rabboni!"

Donald P. Hustad
Editorial Advisory Board
for *The Hymn*,
quarterly of the
Hymn Society of America

(Permission to reprint these two pages is hereby extended to publishers of newsletters and bulletins of church congregations.)

Hymns in Periodical Literature

Hedda Durnbaugh



Hedda Durnbaugh, a member of the HSA Executive Committee, is a librarian at Bethany/Northern Baptist Theological Seminary Library, Oak Brook, Illinois.

Ray Robinson, "Eric Routley, 1917-1982: England's Missionary to American Church Music." *American Organist*, 17, 1 (January 1983), 57.

Besides copious biographical data, this article provides detailed bibliographical information on Routley's published works. The tenor of the article focuses on Routley's significance during the crisis of church music in the early '70s when he was able to demonstrate that the issue was not simply one of good vs. bad, classic vs. "pop," elevating vs. trite, but rather the aiming for "the nourishment of the faithful" through "that salutary touch of discipline and modesty and chastity that leads to Christian maturity."

Michael E. Krentz, "Luther and Church Music in 1983." *American Organist*, 17, 2 (February 1983), 40-42.

The author outlines Luther's theology of music and contrasts it with other interpretations. 1. Whereas Luther understands music as a good gift from God and its use in worship as "a natural response to his love," Zwingli and others limited music in worship to the singing of psalms because non-biblical texts were subject to "the 'evil' powers of music" which arouse human emotions and passions detracting the human mind from God. 2. Whereas with Luther music is "intimately bound with the proclamation of the

Word," rationalist movements, such as the Enlightenment held that the chief function of music in worship was "to edify the worshipper by proving beauty and establishing a mood." Thus Luther's view led to increased congregational participation in worship whereas those of Zwingli and the Rationalists resulted in the opposite.

"Hymn Writers of Today." *American Organist*. The following biographical articles appeared in vol. 17 (1983) thus far:

- Jerry A. Evenrud, "Dale Wood," 11 (January 1983), 27.
- Austin C. Lovelace, "Fred Kaan," 22 (February 1983), 43.
- Gilbert E. Doan, Jr., "Frank von Christerson," 3 (March 1983), 37.
- Valerie Ruddell, "Fred Pratt Green," 42 (April 1983), 36-37.
- Stanley Osborne, "Walter Farquharson," 5 (May 1983), 88-89.
- Robin A. Leaver, "John Wilson," 60 (June 1983), 38-39.

Linda Schiwitz, "Hymn-Writing: Hers." *Moody Monthly*, May 1983, 51-52.

Nine brief biographical sketches of American and English women hymn-writers: Fanny Crosby, Charlotte Elliott, Frances Havergal, Sarah Adams, Adelaide Pollard, Elizabeth Prentiss, Ann Ross Cousin, Margaret Clarkson, and Elvina Hall.

Hymnic News

The 1983 Westminster Abbey Come and Sing

Alan Luff

(Alan Luff is Precentor of Westminster Abbey and Secretary of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland.)

The changing times in hymnody brings changes in the *Come and Sing* sessions at Westminster Abbey, but not, it seems in the readiness of people to come and sing hymns at lunchtime on Wednesdays in May. So this year on May 4th The Rev. Timothy Dudley Smith, Bishop of Thetford, one of Great Britain's leading hymn writers presented his own choice of hymns, his own and other people's, with the Choir of Tarrington's School. We celebrated Luther with The Rev. Robin Leaver of the Choirs of Taunton School and discussed the power and the practicality of the rhythmic versions of the original tunes. The Rev. Geoffrey Wayford has in recent years been concerned with the growing gap between school hymns and those sung in church and he shared that concern, with the help of the Choir of Pimlico School. We had already given thanks for the life of Erik Routley earlier in the year but his presence was felt throughout these sessions where he had often presented hymns, not least in the last when John Wilson, Treasurer of the Hymn Society, with the Highbury Cathedral Singers from

Bristol introduced a selection of less familiar material from our hymn books with as title a typical Erik Routley saying "... but it will need practicing."

The attendances were good throughout. It seems that these sessions are still serving their purpose.

National Gymanfa Ganu Draws 3,300

William E. McDonald

(William E. McDonald teaches church music at Baptist Bible College, Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania. This account is excerpted from his report in The Tribune, Scranton, PA, September 6, 1983. Reprinted by permission).

Northeastern Pennsylvania hosted the 52nd National Gymanfa Ganu this past weekend when the National Gymanfa Ganu Association of the United States and Canada met in Wilkes-Barre. The final two sessions assembled at the Kingston Armory, with some 3,300 attending the Sunday afternoon gathering while a somewhat smaller group came for the evening.

This was a unique opportunity for lovers of great congregational singing. It is the first time this group has met in Northeastern Pennsylvania, though they have met in Pennsylvania in other years.

The outstanding conductor for the two sessions was Alun Guy, head of the music department of Glantaf Welsh Comprehensive School in Cardiff, Wales, and conductor of the Car-

diff Philharmonic Choir and the Glantaf Choir and Symphony Orchestra. Such dynamic leadership evidenced by Mr. Guy created an atmosphere which encouraged the full-voiced singing of those in the congregation.

Sixteen hymns were chosen for each session. The conductor led several stanzas, sometimes in English, sometimes in Welsh. Several entire hymns were sung, alternating stanzas in English and Welsh.

Such standard favorites as RACHIE (Onward, Christian Soldiers), CRIMOND (The Lord's My Shepherd), BRYN CALFARIA (Take Me As I Am, O Savior), HYFRYDOL (Here Is Found a Tabernacle), CWM RHONDDA (Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah), DIADEM (All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name), EBENEZER (Send Thy Spirit, I Beseech Thee), JOANNA (How Firm a Foundation), HUDDERSFIELD (Great God of Wonders!) and ABERYSTWYTH (Jesus, Lover of My Soul) were given the most enthusiastic response.

But less familiar tunes and texts were also included, though to Welsh hymn lovers they were probably as familiar as the above titles. Some of these included BUILTH (The Providence of Heaven), LLEF (Come, Gracious Lord), SANDON (Lead, Kindly Light), MAWIGAN (Let Us Praise the Lord Triumphant), WILKESBARRE (Hosanna, Hallelujah), BLODWEN (Though the Path Be Dreary), DRINGI FYN (Jesus, Friend of Children), BLAENWERN (Love Divine, All Loves Excelling), IN MEMORIAM (There's a Wideness in God's Mercy), 'RWYN CANU (I Sing as a Songbird), PENPARK (Jesus, I Live to Thee) and CALON LAN (I Seek Not Life's Ease and Pleasure).

Certainly these two singing sessions were a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many of us who are not likely to have such an experience

of massed singing again of this magnitude. Only those who were present can verify the tremendous impact made on them by both participating in the singing and by listening to the vast congregation assembled, venting their musical and spiritual emotions in this manner.

HSGBI, Durham 1983

Hugh T. McElrath

(Hugh T. McElrath is Professor in the School of Church Music, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.)

The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland (we saw no-one from Ireland however!) held its 1983 Conference (July 25-27) at Hatfield College in Durham. Being rather far in the north of England, it was expected that the attendance might be less than usual. Actually, the reverse was true. Possibly the excellent program was the attraction, for many of the conferees (over 70 in number) had to be housed in overflow facilities in neighboring colleges.

The six sessions of the conference were equally divided between those of general hymnic interest and those of special interest owing to their connection with anniversaries of like events. The general interest sessions included a lecture on 18th century hymns and their relevance and power for today's worship by Sir Ronald Johnson of Edinburgh; a delightfully informal and even humorous presentation of practical ways to introduce new hymns and bring fresh vitality to old ones by Dr. Lionel Dakers, Director of the Royal School of Church Music; and a session on Sacred Harp singing led by our editor of *The Hymn*, Harry Eskew. You should have seen and heard those Britishers "fasola-ing" in a hollow square!

The sessions of special interest gathered about the hymns and tunes of Martin Luther, the fifth centenary of whose birth is being observed in 1983, the tunes of Orlando Gibbons, born 400 years ago, and the tunes of Erik Routley who was so vitally connected with the life and work of the society and whose sudden death occurred after its last annual meeting.

These sessions were led by three distinguished gentlemen, each of whom was highly knowledgeable of his material and masterful in his presentation. The Lutheran hymns were eruditely discussed by Dr. Gordon Rupp, Methodist church historian and retired professor of Cambridge University, who was a pioneer in the renaissance of Luther's hymns in England. His informative lecture was punctuated by the singing of *AUS TIEFER NOT, EIN' FESTE BURG*, and *VOM HIMMEL HOCH* by the entire group.

Rev. Caryl Micklem, Minister of St. Columba's United Reformed Church, Oxford, and a close personal friend of Erik Routley, discussed Routley's tunes (they number just under a hundred!) with brilliant insight and sensitivity aided by the lovely solo voice of Miss Belinda Yates, recent graduate of the Royal College of Music with John Wilson at the keyboard. Micklem's presentation was a moving memorial tribute in appreciation of the monumental hymnic and hymnological contributions of Routley.

John Wilson, treasurer of the Society, ended the conference with a refreshing admixture of informality and critical scholarship as he sat at the piano to discuss and play the tunes of Gibbons. Fully as interesting as the formal presentations were the open discussion following each, during which the British penchant for raising provocative and penetrating

questions was given free rein.

The climax, of course, came on the second evening with the awe-inspiring Act of Praise which took place in the massive Norman Cathedral at Durham. Concentrating on the hymns and tunes not only of those whose anniversaries were being celebrated (those mentioned above plus John Keble whose Assize Sermon of 1833 at the University church initiated the Oxford Movement) but of those especially connected in some way with Durham (J. B. Dykes, William Whittingham, Philip Armes and the Venerable Bede), the hymns were skillfully conducted by Richard Lloyd, Choirmaster and organist of the Cathedral, ably assisted by Ian Shaw at the great organ. With brief and appropriate commentary by Alan Luff, Precentor of Westminster Abbey and President of the Hymn Society, the singing of the congregation was led out by a large festival chorus of some 450 voices made up of members of choirs from the diocese of Durham. The singing was glorious and the fervent spirit it manifested, so typical of the north of England, was truly uplifting despite the almost insurmountable problems for ensemble that the great expanse of Durham Cathedral presented.

An optional extra treat was the opportunity to hear an excellent recording of the Memorial Service to Dr. Routley which was held in Westminster Abbey on February 8, 1983. Canon Alan Dunstan, Precentor of Gloucester Cathedral, becomes the next President of the Society at its 1984 meeting in Chichester (July 23-25). Many of the society members during the conference expressed the hope of being able to travel to Boston, Massachusetts in 1985 for the joint conference with the HSA and the IAH. Along with those from the con-

continent of Europe, we Americans can look forward with eager anticipation to the stimulating contribution the British Society members will make to those meetings.

The *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* Reaches 25 & 1

Robin A. Leaver

(Robin A. Leaver is an Anglican clergyman who serves a parish near Oxford and edits News of Hymnody.)

The *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie*, founded in 1955 by Konrad Ameln, Christhard Mahrenholz and Karl Ferdinand Müller, published by Johannes Stauda, Kassel, has made its mark as the most scholarly and influential publication in the field of hymnology. Although to date 26 volumes have been published, it deserves to be better known in English-speaking areas. Part of the problem has been that until recently all the contributions have been in German. However, for the last two years this substantial annual publication has included important hymnological studies in English as well as English summaries of the other major articles and essays. The structure is the same in each *Jahrbuch*. First there are two or three major studies, sometimes they are extracts from doctoral dissertations which in some years reflect mainly liturgical consensus, while in other years the emphasis is on hymnological studies. Then follow starter pieces and reports (about 15 to 20) with hymnological concerns usually predominating. Together they reflect both scientific and practical matters—history and source material, contemporary problems and needs, questions

of function and use as well as origin and purpose. With the current volume (Vol. 26) a most useful index has been issued (which can be obtained separately), which unlocks the treasures of the first 25 volumes. Individuals will find that the index will save them valuable time in that it will enable them to discover which volumes they need to consult, if they have to have recourse to a library to do so.

The final part, usually running to 40-50 tightly-packed pages, is a systematic listing of recently published literature, both books and articles, on liturgy, hymnology, and church music, published mainly in the Western world, but not exclusively so. There are special sections covering the United Kingdom and the United States of America. It is a most useful bibliographical source and no library which deals with liturgy and hymnology can afford to be without this important annual publication which grows in importance and usefulness with every new volume.

IAH, Budapest 1983

Marilyn Kay Stulken

(Marilyn Kay Stulken is Organist-Director of Music of Trinity Lutheran Church, Kenosha, Wisconsin, and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for The Hymn.)

Two years ago the first joint conference of the International Fellowship for Research in Hymnology (IAH), the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Hymn Society of America was held at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, England. Although the next officially-scheduled joint conference is in 1985, this year's regular biennial con-



HSA participants at Budapest

ference of the IAH held in Budapest at the University's Central Theological Seminary was in many respects a second such event. One hundred thirty-four persons representing 17 countries were registered for the conference, including some forty members of the HSA as well as representatives of the HSGBI. This year's theme was "Folksong in the Church." As before, German and English were the official languages for the conference.

Monday evening's session opened with introductory remarks by Dr. Markus Jenny, president of the IAH. These were followed by greetings and welcome from the Cardinal of Hungary, the Bishop of the Reformed Church in Hungary, and a representative of the Bishop of the Lutheran Church of Hungary. Hope for greater ecumenism and strengthened peace and love between peoples was a common theme in the words of these three church leaders. The first of the week's five lectures followed. In his "Folk Song and Church Song in Hungarian Searching for Folk Mu-

sic," Dr. Benjamin Rajeczky described the search for and collecting of Hungarian folk song, especially the work of Kodály and Bartók, and included a number of taped examples. The evening closed with a fine concert of Gregorian chants by the Schola Hungarica.

Each day opened with a morning lecture. On Tuesday morning Dr. Heinz Rölleke of Wupperthal spoke on *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, an early 19th century collection of secular and "spiritual" texts written in imitation of folksong as the romantics of the day understood.

On Wednesday the Rev. Alan Luff of London presented a delightful paper "May I Introduce . . . Carols from the British Isles." The many and varied examples, on tape or sung live, often with audience participation on the refrains, ranged from the medieval "There Is no Rose of Such Virtue" to Sydney Carter's "Standing in the Rain," and included some Welsh as well as English carols.

"Reforms and Crises in the Church

Music of the Twentieth Century" was read by László Dobszay of Budapest on Thursday. The paper traced the background of some of the problems in church music today, especially in the Catholic churches, and suggested that improvements can best be made when clergy and musicians work together to create a unified liturgy.

Friday morning's lecture, "Spiritual Folk Songs of the United States," by Dr. Leonard Ellinwood of the United States, was enjoyed by all. His discussion included fusing tunes, spirituals, black hymnody, gospel songs, and ballads, and moved from early American folksong to folksong of our day. The participants from America formed a choir to demonstrate many of the pieces.

Plenary sessions and smaller discussion groups held at various times during the week allowed the participants to respond to the lectures and to share their ideas on folksong in the church, or to discuss a special topic of Luther and hymnody.

Brief worship services were held at noon in the University Church, a dark, massive room with extensive Baroque decor. Hymns were sung in English, German, and Latin, and occasionally also in Hungarian. Scriptures and prayers were in English or German, and the Lord's Prayer was always spoken simultaneously in the many native tongues represented.

On Wednesday afternoon the registrants traveled by bus to the cathedral at Esztergom, see of the Cardinal of Hungary. Following a brief worship service in the cathedral and a tour of the building, the group was received by Cardinal László Lékaí at his palace.

Evening services during the week included worship at the Reformed

Church in Calvin Square on Tuesday and a Catholic Choral Mass at the beautiful St. Matthias Church in the castle district on Thursday.

Several concerts were also a part of the program. In addition to the Schola Hungarica of Sunday evening, programs were presented by the Lutheran Choir of Oroszlány, the choir of Linköping Cathedral in Sweden, the choir and orchestra of St. Matthias Church, and a Hungarian choral group.

At the end of the conference each participant received a packet containing two Hungaroton recordings ("Choral Music of Kodály," and the "Te Deum of Buda Castle" and "Missa Brevis" by Kodály); *O Wahres Wort*, Kálmán Csomasz-Tóth's newly-published collection of hymns and tunes from Hungarian sources; a collection of masses; a collection of Hungarian Lutheran choral works.

One cannot close a report such as this without commenting also on the wonderful hospitality shown by our hosts of the IAH and by the persons at the seminary where the conference was held, and also to note that a major benefit aside from the established program at such an event is the opportunity to come to know hymnologists, church musicians, and worship leaders from many countries.

As mentioned above, a joint conference of the IAH, HSBGI, and HSA will be held in 1985 in the USA.

A week prior to attending the conference, many of the American participants toured sites of hymnological and musical significance in East Germany (see *The Hymn*, July, 1983, p. 170), including a visit to Herrnhut where they participated in a Moravian *Gebetssingstunde*.

Reviews

William C. Teague Hymn-Based Easter Music 254

Austin C. Lovelace Hymns for Today's Church 255

Hymn-Based Easter Music

Reviewed by William C. Teague, Choirmaster-Organist, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Shreveport, Louisiana.

Edited by Paul Hammond, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Arkansas.

The Hymns of Martin Luther (Volume 2). Text translations by F. Samuel Janzow; musical settings by Paul Bunjes, Richard Hillert, and Carl Schalk. Concordia, Full Score 97-5455; choir score 97-5461; instrumental parts 97-5462.

This is the second volume in a projected six volume series and contains six hymns for Lent, Easter and Pentecost with suggestions for a variety of ways of performance. The translations are excellent and the music for both the organ and other instruments is kept simple. The entire series will be a valuable addition to a church library.

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today. Vac-lav Nelhybel. SATB choir, Brass, Organ, and Optional Timpani. Hope Publishing Company. F960.

This anthem is based on the traditional melody with a lot of unison singing with the choir going into four parts for the alleluias. In those parts

where the choir is doing music different from the traditional setting Nelhybel holds everything together with the organ. From past works by this composer we have come to expect excellent brass parts and this anthem is no exception.

Hymns for the Easter Season. Arr. Herbert Colvin. Organ, choir (or congregation) with high voice descant. Word, CS-2997.

In this collection, Colvin uses three hymns; "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," "Crown Him with Many Crowns," and "O Worship the King." For each hymn he has provided the traditional setting until the final stanza, for which he modulates to a higher key, provides a free accompaniment and a high voice descant. The higher key used in the first hymn puts the congregation on a high F-sharp, so this first hymn might well be lowered throughout.

I Know that My Redeemer Lives. Hal H. Hopson. For congregation, SATB choir and organ. G.I.A. Publications, G-2344.

Hopson has used the familiar hymn tune DUKE STREET for his setting of this wonderful Easter text. There is a fine introduction played by the organ. Stanza one can be sung by the choir and congregation in unison; stanza two is for congregation singing the melody with a for part choir; stanza three is for choir with the male voices singing a counter melody to the tune sung by the treble voices; and stanza four uses the choir and congregation again singing the cantus with a treble descant. It is a very practical and joyful setting of the text.

Now the Green Blade Rises. By Ken Heitshusen. SATB and Organ, Concordia No. 98-2524.

This lovely French carol NOEL NOUVELET has become associated with the Easter season almost as much as it is with the Christmas season. This is a very traditional and useful setting of the carol. The first and last stanzas are in unison, the second uses canonic writing, and the third is in four parts and should be sung without the organ. If you do not have a setting of this text and tune this is a good one to have.

Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise. Arr. Robert J. Powell, Uses LLANFAIR. Concertato for congregation, SATB choir and organ. G.I.A. Publications, G-2418.

Robert Powell is a popular composer who is a fine craftsman. This Easter anthem is another example of his workmanship. He has set the fine Charles Wesley text to this highly singable tune. After an organ introduction, the choir and congregation sing stanza one in unison. Stanza two has the men singing mostly in unison

with the trebles singing counterparts. Stanza three slips into the minor, and the concluding stanza returns to the major key with the congregation joining the choir for a highly successful close.

Ride on, Ride on in Majesty. By Carl Schalk. A Chorale Concertato for congregation, choir, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, and organ. Uses WINCHESTER NEW, Concordia 98-2528.

This is a fine anthem especially suited for Palm Sunday. The brass quartet plays the introduction to the unison setting of the first stanza. The melody is in the tenor for the second stanza for choir alone. The third stanza is a unison setting for choir and congregation with the two trumpets and organ providing the accompaniment. Stanza four, which moves into a new key, is for four-part choir with the melody again in the tenor. The final stanza is for brass quartet, choir, and congregation in unison with a descant. This will provide a practical and festive anthem for the service on Palm Sunday.

* * *

Hymns for Today's Church. 622 hymns. Published by Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 47 Bedford Square, London WC1P 3DP. ISBN 0 340 27045 4.

The publication of any new hymnal is an invitation to controversy, and *Hymns for Today's Church* is no exception. Since its appearance in 1982 in England it has stirred up a hornet's nest in church circles and in the press. The editorial committee, which spent nine years of work, forthrightly explains their goals and purposes in the preface: to produce "the first major new hymn book of the new era" and to revise "hymns to

match today's Bible and liturgy translations" so the book "will bring great refreshment to worship services, and will be a joy and inspiration to many Christians."

The obvious question is, did they succeed in their mission? A more primary question may be whether their original premises are valid. Every generation faces the danger of assuming that it alone sees the truth properly, and therefore obviously is better able to state past truths in "modern" "up-to-date" language. But it may be that each age (including the present one) has something unique to contribute which is better left as close to the original poetic form as possible. Time has a way of winnowing out the ephemeral, the verbose, and the heavily didactic, the ripely romantic, and poor theological hymns that are to be found in every generation. And while the goal of the multitude of new scripture translations is to make the exact meaning clear, the hymnal does not necessarily fit this pattern. It uses the language of ecstasy and poetry, and those who have tried to sing some of the ICET texts have found that many sing poorly. What does it profit to catch exact meanings and to take away the soul of hymnody?

The committee agreed on a core of some 350 "essential hymns" to which they applied their hymn tinkering methods—some successfully, some dreadfully, and more than a few "invisibly mended" so that most people would not even notice the alterations. But this reviewer would suggest that many of these older traditional hymns which have gradually and inexorably dropped from favor and usage should be allowed to die decently without an attempted resurrection with new textual and theological life support systems. The

editors have revised many such hymns to avoid a verbal and cultural gulf, but often the result is a rather mamby-pamby rehash of a theology which is hardly worth the effort. In the case of many 19th century hymns they have "judiciously" re-written the "more sentimental sections." Again the results are dubious.

Perhaps the foremost (and the editors seem to think the least controversial) alteration has been in the change from "Thee-Thou-Thy" to "You-Your". On the face of it, this should be readily acceptable, but there are some problems. To remove all the "th" sounds to the oozy "You" diphthong sans consonant takes away the bite, the edge, the attack in singing. "Thine be the glory" is eminently more singable and exciting than "Yours be the glory"—and the meaning is certainly no less clear. Admittedly the original forms may be archaic, but are they any less understandable by the singer in the pew? Additionally, "Thee" is a very much used ending word which allows many effective simple rhymes in English. The convolutions in altering these rhymes at times are tedious and forced.

There is also an ecumenical objection to some of the changes. When familiar texts are radically altered, confusion (as well as anger) is sure to occur when a variety of denominations meet and sing together. Some examples:

(From "You Servants of God,
Your Master Proclaim")

God rules in the height,
almighty to save—
though hid from our sight,
his presence we have;

or
Take my life and let it be
all you purpose, Lord, for me;
consecrate my passing days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

and
take my feet, and let them run
with the news of victory won.

No doubt the editors feel these changes are for the better, but old familiar lines are too ingrained in singers' memories for them to accept such alterations easily. As a result the confusion and anger certainly will not make worship more joyful and meaningful.

Perhaps the most objectionable revision is Michael Seward's almost complete rewriting of John Milton's "Let Us with a Gladsome Mind." I do not find his version better than the original. Why didn't he just write a new hymn on Psalm 136? This is exactly what Michael Perry did at No. 322 "In Christ there Is No East or West." However, after leading us to expect an old favorite everything else is entirely new after the first line. W. A. Dunkerley is given credit for inspiring the new work by his opening line!

An American classic by Harry Emerson Fosdick also goes under the knife. To avoid "thy" the first lines become

God of grace and God of glory,
come among us in your power.

Adequate, perhaps, but this effectively ruins the alliteration (people-pour-power) and alters the meaning as well as the more picturesque and powerful line. In stanza two the use of "o" vowel is altered to an ineffective "ee":

See the hosts of evil round us
scorn your Christ, attack his ways!

Do the editors think "attack" is more understandable and effective than "assail"? Finally, they rearrange the last two stanzas. "Serving you (Thee) whom we adore"—a great closing line of climax now appears at the end

of stanza three, and the editor's ending is "lest we miss *our* kingdom's goal"—a complete misinterpretation of Fosdick's intent. Changing "Thy" to "our" here is unforgivable.

With the controversy in America over non-sexist (inclusive) language, one would expect that the editors would also omit every reference to "man," "mankind," "brotherhood," etc., but such is not the case. They state that they have "responded to this with care and sympathy but not to the point of fatuity . . . The issue is one where moderation seems the wisest course and we have taken particular care to avoid wherever possible the introduction of sexist language in our own revisions of earlier hymns." If they have elected to be non-flexible with the "thee" problem, what is to prevent the next set of editors from re-writing the hymnal to get rid of masculine words, to delete references to God as "Father", to alter references to "King of kings", the Kingdom of God, etc., etc. Once Pandora's box is opened there is no way to prevent any group with a special axe to grind from tinkering with every hymn ever written forever and ever, world without end.

The basic error of the book's approach is that it fails to take into consideration the necessity for poetic and symbolic language to be its own self. If a congregation does not understand "Here I raise my Ebenezer" (which line they do not include), don't throw out the line but instead enlarge the vision and understanding by explanation. A symbol can and should point beyond itself to the greater truth. To get rid of symbols because the editors think they are old fashioned or unfamiliar is to short-change a congregation. Poetry has its own patterns, and each generation seeks new ones. Let us enjoy what

each has to offer instead of restructuring and forcing poetry to conform to our own poor poetic age. After reading scores of altered hymns, my impression was that they all sounded alike—that all had been whittled down to a Common Meter mentality and outlook. A certain dullness and sameness took away the pleasure of the ancient word or expression. There is a past, and greatness in it; let us have the past as it was or attempted to be. If what it said is no longer true, don't mend and bend—let it go quietly.

This brings up the next problem with the book—new texts. Over a thousand modern hymns were considered (including many never published), and material submitted by members of the team were judged anonymously. However, their tastes must have been so similar that they chose heavily from their own writings—hymns created in their own image. There are 117 texts (out of a total of 622 hymns) by Michael Saward, Christopher Idle, Michael Perry, and James Seddon. (Watts and Wesley don't do that well!) Maybe 14 of these will be seriously considered by future hymnal editors. Far superior to the rather bland, patterned, unfresh, self-conscious texts by these four are the 16 hymns by David Mowbray and especially several of the 46 by Timothy Dudley-Smith. To the book's credit, there are hymns by 36 contemporary hymn writers, including some fine items by Brian Wren, a surprisingly small number from Fred Pratt Green, and even fewer from Fred Kaan.

There is a similar case against the book in the matter of tunes written by members of the tunes committee. There are 163 tunes by David Wilson, John Barnard, Simon Beckley, David Iliff, David Peacock, Christian

Strover, Noel Tredinnick, and Norman Warren—the music committee. Many admittedly were written to match unusual meters found in the newer texts, but the tunes by the chairman, Michael Baughen, Bishop of Chester, are especially embarrassing. Many of the tunes are angular, most seem to have been created at the keyboard, some have mild syncopation, and few seem to have the needed qualities of singability and memorability. A new tune coupled with a new text is enough of a problem without the tune being difficult to remember.

While there seems to be a heavy dosage of Victorian tunes (15 by Stainer and 13 by Dykes, for example), at least contemporary composers do get exposure with 42 names in the index. Peter Cutts, who has a fine knack for singable tunes, is credited with only two.

Certain excellent features of the book should be mentioned. There is a large number of new paraphrases from the Scriptures. In addition to fine material by Willcocks, Holst, Cutts, Routley, and Hurford there are some fine descants by Robin Sheldon, C. S. Lang, Alan Gray, John Barnard, and Geoffrey Shaw. Organists will be interested in some of the reharmonizations. (An asterisk* in the index indicates descants, arrangements, and faux-bourbons.) One is tempted to ask, if the committee had to bring up to date the texts, why didn't they reharmonize and rewrite all the Victorian tunes?

There are 96 texts for which two or more alternate tunes are given. Sometimes it is obvious that the editors are trying to wean away the singers from an old favorite which they do not like, but other times there are two distinctly new tunes for a new text. Here is a fertile field for trying out alter-

nate tunes with a choir and congregation to find the best mating.

In the title index, the original opening lines of altered favorites are included in italics for ease of locating them. (The new opening line is listed immediately below.) There is a Supplementary section including what looks to be the "popular" and semi-charismatic material popular in some English churches. It is almost entirely ephemeral. The index of hymns based on biblical passages is impressive and helpful. Seventeen historical-liturgical hymns (mostly in new translations) are given their own index, and the entire book is geared and indexed to the Lectionary themes of the *Alternative Service Book*, 1980. While this lectionary will not parallel that used in American churches, the listing of hymns for the major seasons will be

useful to worship planners.

The book is beautifully printed and very few mistakes were observed in reading through. "Come and see the shining hope" sung to MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA (really!) should be listed as 188 instead of 191.

The hymnal certainly does point in a specific direction. It is worth the time spent to study the material carefully to see what the editors have done and to see if this should be the direction of the future. It is fair to say that the editors accomplished what they set out to do. It is not all that clear that their goals are the wave of the future. It seems doubtful that everyone will jump on their bandwagon, or that anyone should.

Austin C. Lovelace
Wellshire Presbyterian Church
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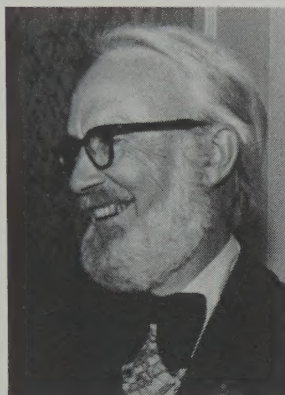
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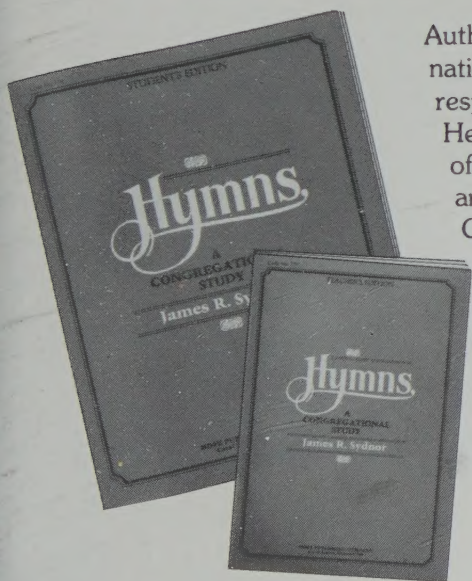
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Author James R. Sydnor is a nationally acclaimed and widely respected leader in church music. He is a former Vice President of The Hymn Society of America and Dean of the Richmond, Va. Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He has also served on numerous hymnal committees and recently published a guide to improved congregational singing entitled: **HYMNS AND THEIR USES**.

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